

# PLUCK AND LUCK

## HUSTLING BOB

### OR THE SMARTEST BOY IN TOWN

AND OTHER STORIES

BROOKVILLE

IN TOWN

By Richard B. Sewall



In the struggle the revolver was discharged, and the report so frightened the horses that they went dashing off on a mad run, throwing Bob and the lunatic out backward into the road.



# PLUCK AND LUCK

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## HUSTLING BOB

### OR, THE SMARTEST BOY IN TOWN

By RICHARD R. MONTGOMERY

#### CHAPTER I.—The Boy Who Wanted to Work.

"That boy is a hustler, whoever he is," remarked Squire Evans, as he stood looking out of the window of his law office one bright September morning. "I don't care who he is or where he came from, he's certainly a hustler and it's a great pity we haven't more like him in town."

"Which boy do you mean?" asked the Hon. James S. Wendell, looking down into the street over the lawyer's shoulder.

"That one there—the fellow who is sweeping off the sidewalk for Black, the butcher," replied the squire, pointing down at a ragged boy of some nineteen years who was working an old broom vigorously a little farther down the block.

"That fellow? Why, he looks like a tramp!"

"I understand he is a tramp. He came into town here about a week ago, nobody knows where from, I believe."

"I've no use for tramps," replied the Hon. James, coldly.

"Nor have I, as a rule; but I say again that boy is a hustler. If he lives he'll make his mark."

"He certainly seems to be making a good deal of dust down there. Is he working for Black, do you know?"

"He's working for anybody who will give him a job," replied the lawyer, "and whatever he puts his hand to he seems to do with the same energy that you see him displaying with that broom."

"By Jove, I wish he'd put in a couple of days for me, then, and finish painting the front of my barn," said Mr. Wendell. "Those lazy beggars of Dalman's have been on a strike for eight hours for the past three weeks, meanwhile my barn stands half-painted and looks like distress. I'm expecting Senator Wright on from Washington to pay me a visit at the end of this week. I'm really ashamed of the looks of my place as it is. Wonder if he can paint?"

"Well, now, I guess he can," laughed Mr. Evans. "I wanted the floor of my back office painted and Dalman couldn't do it on account of the strike. It was finished day before yesterday, though. How do you think it looks?"

"Why, it looks first-rate," said Mr. Wendell, surveying the floor. "Is that the boy's work?"

"It is. I don't know as he'd dare to tackle your barn, on account of the strike."

"Strike be blowed!" cried the Congressman. "Six journeymen painters in town and I with a job for which I stand ready to pay double the price to have finished and can't get it done. I'm going to give the boy a chance."

"If he tackles it, he'll finish it, Wendell," said the squire; "that boy Bob is a hustler and no mistake."

Now Squire Evans was not the only man in Brookville who had come to the same conclusion about this boy. Who he was or where he came from nobody seemed to know, but one thing everybody admitted and that was that the boy was a hustler. Nearly every tradesman in the street had tried him at odd jobs and in every instance he had worked as though he loved work. Squire Evans was not the only one who had become interested in the boy.

When the Hon. James S. Wendell went downstairs out of Squire Evans's office he fully intended to go straight up to Bob and have a talk with him, but one of his old friends met him at the door and took him into the bank, and after that other business took his attention and he forgot all about it until just before noon he ran into Bob, who was walking rapidly up Main street.

"Hold on, young man, you are driving ahead as though you were going somewhere!" exclaimed the magnate of Brookville, laying his hand on the boy's arm.

"So I am, sir. I'm looking for a job."

"Hello! Why, you are hustling along as though you had some special job in your mind's eye. Is that so?"

"No, sir. I can't strike anything more to do here in town, so I'm going over to Dalton to try my luck there."

"Going to walk it?"

"Why, yes, sir. The only horse I own is shank's mare."

"Yes? You were working her for all she was worth when I stopped you. Do you know me, boy?"

"You are Mr. Wendell, I believe."

"That's who I am, and they tell me you are Bob somebody. What's the other name?"

"Somers, sir. Bob Somers. If you have anything to do—"

"Perhaps I have; perhaps I have. I live in the big house on the hill; there's a barn up there



half-painted. Want to finish the job, Mr. Hustling Bob?"

Now the Hon. James had a very pleasant way about him, and when he gave Bob this nickname, which afterward stuck close to him, there was nothing offensive about it; and Bob, who was not at all thin-skinned, took it just as it was meant.

"That's strike business, sir," he said. "I suppose the painters here in town would go for me if I was to tackle that job."

"That's your lookout, young man. Dalman is paying three and a half a day for ten hours' work and these fellows are on strike for eight hours. I want the job finished and I'll pay fifty cents an hour to you or any one else who will take hold. The paints are mine, and so are the brushes and the ladders. They are all on the ground, so if you want to jump right in and earn my money, all you've got to do is to say the word."

"I'll do it," said Bob, after a moment's thought. "I'm not a painter. I don't belong to their union. I don't see why I should say no and turn good work away."

"Spoken like a man!" cried Mr. Wendell. "I admire a hustler. I've nothing to do with Dalman's quarrels. I want my barn painted and if you'll paint it for me, you won't be sorry, that's all."

And Bob did hustle. All that afternoon he slapped the paint on Mr. Wendell's barn and he did it pretty smoothly, too.

At six o'clock Mr. Wendell came out with his daughter, Nellie, to have a look at the work and pronounced it all right.

"Where are you stopping, my boy?" he asked.

"Well, sir, I'm not stopping anywhere in particular," he replied.

"Where are you from, anyway?"

Bob looked troubled.

"I don't want to talk about myself, sir, if you please," he said quietly. "I—er—"

"You would be obliged to me if I'd mind my own business," laughed the Congressman. "Well, there'll be supper for you to eat in the kitchen by and by and breakfast tomorrow morning and there's the hay to sleep on until the job is done."

"Oh, can't we give the young man a room, father?" exclaimed Miss Nellie; "it seems just dreadful to have to sleep in the barn."

"No, miss, I do not care for a room," replied Bob, promptly. "I don't want to trouble any one. I can take care of myself."

"Independent. Well, I like that," said Mr. Wendell, as he strolled on into the garden with his daughter.

He was right. Bob was independent. He slept that night in the freight yard at Burling Junction, two miles out of Brookville, where he had been sleeping every night since he came to town.

It was not until ten o'clock next morning that Dalman's striking painters got onto the fact that Congressman Wendell's barn was being painted by a tramp. At half-past eleven, while Bob was working on the scaffold, he suddenly heard a gruff voice sing out:

"Hey, there, you young scab! Come down!"

Bob turned his eyes toward the ground and saw a stout man with a florid face and a good deal of watch-chain looking up at him.

"Were you speaking to me?" he asked, dipping his brush into the paint pot and keeping right on with the work.

"Who else?" snarled the man, who, by the way, Bob could not remember to have seen around town before. "Come down out of that now, before I bring you down—no talk!"

"Who are you?" demanded Bob, twisting his brush so as to send a shower of paint down, which sent the fellow jumping back to save his shiny tall hat.

"Don't you try that again, you young cub!" he roared. "Who be I? Why, I'm Pete Pryer, walking delegate of the Dalton Painters' Union. You want to quit this here job, or we'll make it hot for you—understand?"

"No," replied Bob, "I don't understand. I don't know you and I don't want to. I'm hustling for work. Mr. Wendell hired me to paint this barn and I'm going to do it in spite of you or any other man."

"You are, hey? We'll see about that. We'll lay you out for this!" Pete Pryer roared, shaking his fist at Bob, who said no more, but just kept on painting as though nothing had occurred.

"Are you coming down?" shouted the walking delegate, after waiting a while for Bob to speak.

"Yes," replied our young hustler, coolly, "I'm coming down when I finish my job."

"You're coming down now!" roared the delegate, seizing the rope which controlled the movements of the ladder.

"Let that rope alone!" shouted Bob, standing up on the scaffold. "Let it alone, I say!"

Just then Miss Nellie Wendell turned into the grounds on her wheel and came riding rapidly toward the barn.

"Come down, you young scab, or I'll bring you down!" snarled Mr. Pete Pryer, unfastening the rope.

Now, the fellow was half drunk, or he would surely have known better, for the instant he untied the rope one end of the scaffold dropped. Bob seized the supporting rope on the other side and held on for dear life. Down flew the paint pot, turning its contents on the shiny plug hat of Mr. Pete Pryer, who, with a fierce imprecation, jumped backward, too late to save himself from the shower of paint, but just in time to back into Miss Nellie Wendell's bicycle. There was a full-fledged collision all in an instant. Nellie saw what was coming and jumped just in time to save herself, but the walking delegate, with his ruined tile flying off his head, fell sprawling in the path.

## CHAPTER II.—The Cry in the Night.

"Blast you! What did you run me down for? I'll make you sweat for this, even if you are Jim Wendell's daughter."

Pete Pryer was mad—real mad. He was also about half drunk, and, being an ugly fellow at all times, he made a rush at the Congressman's daughter, stamped on the fallen wheel and would surely have struck the frightened girl if he had been given the chance. But he wasn't. Hustling Bob was there, and Bob, when he was aroused, was a host in himself. He saw what was coming before it came and swung down to the ground as quick as a flash.

"That's yours, you brute!" shouted Bob, striking out with his right and taking Pete Pryer under the ear. Down went the delegate a second



time, falling on his ruined hat and crushing it out of all shape, beside smearing his coat all over with paint.

"Oh! Oh!" screamed Nellie. "Don't get into a fight. He'll hurt you! Don't run any risk on my account!"

"Leave him to me!" blazed Bob, seizing Pete Pryer by the coat collar and jerking him to his feet.

What the end of it might have been it is hard to say if the coachman, who was at the other end of the yard, had not jumped in to help. He saw what had happened and quietly unloosed a fierce watch dog, which now came rushing upon the scene barking furiously. That was the time when Mr. Pete Pryer did not stand on the order of his going, but just went, and that as fast as his legs could carry him.

"Are you hurt, miss?" asked Bob respectfully.

"Not in the least, thanks to you," replied Nellie; "but, oh, my poor wheel! That brute has ruined it, I am afraid. Who was he? What brought him in here?"

"He came here to stop me from working on the barn," replied Bob. "Your father will understand about it when I tell him. Don't worry about your wheel. Just leave it here and I'll fix it after I am through my work."

Bob was as good as his word. In spite of the interruption by Mr. Pete Pryer, he finished his job on the barn that evening shortly after six. Then he took the damaged wheel around to Mr. Wendell's little workshop, in the rear of the barn, and tinkered away on it until nine o'clock. When at last he stood it up in the shed, where it belonged, it was as good as new; the most expert wheel repairer could not deny that it was in every way a good job. There was a party in the big house that evening and Bob made no attempt to see anyone. He could see the ladies dancing as he passed out of the grounds; he paused for a moment to listen to the music and then, with a sigh, passed through the gate.

"No matter," he muttered. "All that sort of thing belongs to the past. I'm here to hustle, not for pleasure. I'm glad I've done up at that house. I don't want to go there any more."

Next day Bob struck a job down in the freight yard helping to unload a car and to cart the goods up to a small factory at the other end of town, the regular driver being sick. He did not see anything of Mr. Wendell until the following Wednesday, when he accidentally met him on the street. As for the striking painters and their walking delegate, Bob saw nothing more of them, and the incident was pretty well forgotten until Mr. Wendell brought it to mind again by warmly congratulating him on the courage he had shown.

"And, by the way, Bob, what do I owe you?" asked the Congressman, pulling out his pocket-book. "You shouldn't have gone off without your money the way you did."

"That's all right, sir," replied Bob; then he named the sum and got it, and was just starting to go when Mr. Wendell asked him what he was driving at just then.

"Hustling, sir; hustling, as usual," replied Bob. "All is fish that comes to my net."

If Mr. Wendell had only known it, Bob's hustling propensities were to do something for him before many hours had passed. It began to rain that afternoon and Bob was obliged to leave off weeding a garden for a lady on Cross Street,

which was the only job he could find to do that day. He bought a small loaf of bread at the baker's and a bit of cheese and a little smoked beef of the grocer, and, wrapping it all in a paper, walked through the rain to Burling Junction, where he proceeded to eat his dinner in a broken-down freight car. This was Bob's house. The yardmaster knew it and not only allowed him to stay there, but provided him with a padlock to keep the tramps out. There was nobody about the freight yard that night except the track-walker. After he had eaten his supper, or dinner, whichever you like to call it, Bob went up in the tower house and stayed a while talking with Jim Ettinger, the tower man, with whom he had become acquainted and who liked to have him come in.

"I don't feel at all well tonight, Bob," said Ettinger, as he unlocked the block to let in the east-bound express. "My head aches terribly, and I've got such a queer feeling about the eyes; why, I can hardly see what I'm doing."

"Perhaps you've got the grip," said Bob sympathetically.

"No, I don't think it is that," replied the tower man. "I'm afraid it's something more serious."

"Why don't you go and see a doctor when you get off?"

"Perhaps I will tomorrow. You see, I don't get off until one o'clock. My partner comes up on 32—what's Dalton calling? Another wild-cat train, I'll bet. Yes, that makes the second tonight. Can't have the block now, though. Yes, it can, too. There goes Rushmore; the block is all clear."

While talking, Jim Ettinger was working the telegraph key with one hand and holding on to one of his shifting levers with the other. He now pulled the lever down as far as it would go and the signal on the pole dropped.

"Now she's open, I suppose," remarked Bob.

"Now the block is clear," replied Ettinger, and for fully the tenth time he explained to Bob the working of the huge iron levers which controlled the movements of the trains by that wonderful safety block system, now in use by almost every railroad in the land. Bob listened and in a moment an engine drawing one gayly painted car went flying by.

"What's that?" asked Bob.

"Give it up," replied the tower man. "It may be the president of the road for all I know."

He then called Dalton on the wire and closed the block again. Then he leaned his head on his hands and groaned.

Bob stayed until after eleven, letting the tower man catch a cat-nap twice, waking him the instant the call came on the telegraph instrument. It was raining harder than ever when Bob left at last and went down to his freight car, where the soft side of a plank was his bed.

Bob just pulled off his damp coat, rolled it up for a pillow and flung himself down on the floor. How long he had slept he had no idea, when suddenly he was awakened by a fearful thunder clap. The noise was deafening. It brought Bob to his feet, and as he sprang up he thought he heard his own name shouted in his ear.

"Bob! Bob! Bob!"

Was he dreaming? Suddenly the whole interior of the car was lit up by a most vivid lightning flash. Before the crash came—and it



was only an instant—the cry in the night was repeated:

"Bob! Bob! Bob!"

### CHAPTER III.—"Stop that Train."

Bob hustled out of the freight car in a hurry, stopping no longer than to turn the key in the padlock. As he leaped down to the ground he glanced up at the tower and saw Ettinger waving his hand violently out of the window, at the same time shouting something which Bob could not understand. He started on the run for the tower only to find himself up to his knees in water before he had gone three yards. Bob rushed in through the water and was almost at the door of the tower house when he heard a sound which made his blood run cold.

"Hoo! Hoo! Hoo! Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!"

It was a wild, unearthly cry. Twice it was repeated and then all at once a shot rang out upon the night and before Bob could take another step a tall man with long hair hanging down over his shoulders sprang out from the shadow of the tower house with a smoking revolver in his hand. "Keep back!" he shouted. "Keep back! I'm the president of this railroad. No trespassing allowed here!"

"Slug him, Bob! Slug him! He's as crazy as a bug!" shouted Jim Ettinger from the tower. "He's fired three shots at me!"

"Yes, and there goes another!" yelled the lunatic, firing point blank at Bob.

Luckily the shot flew wide of the mark. Bob did not wait for another, you may be very certain. He made a rush for the lunatic, who yelled loud enough to wake the dead, and, turning, darted away through the water like a deer, disappearing among the thick bushes farther along the bank.

"Come up, Bob! Come up!" shouted Ettinger. "I've opened the door; for heaven's sake come quick, I believe I'm dying!"

The law should be that two men must be stationed in every tower, but it is not so. If Ettinger was really dying who was to look out for the block there at that lonely junction, where there was not a house?

Clearly there was nobody under the circumstances, but our Hustling Bob, who flung open the door, which was controlled by a wire in the tower, and rushed up the dark stairs. Evidently Ettinger had pulled the wire, for the door opened at the first touch.

"Hoo—hoo! Hoo—hoo! Hoo—hoo!" the lunatic was heard yelling in the distance. Then there was a heavy fall overboard.

Bob threw up the trapdoor at the head of the steep stairs and stood petrified with horror at the sight which met his gaze. Ettinger lay face down upon the floor and motionless.

"Mr. Ettinger! Mr. Ettinger!" cried Bob, bending down and turning the tower man over on his back.

The man's face was fiery red and his half open eyes were fixed and glossy. Bob was no fool. He saw that it was a case of apoplexy or something like it. Suddenly the telegraph instrument began clicking. It was either Dalton or Rushmore calling:

"If I could only answer and let them know," thought Bob.

But this was a peg beyond him, for, with all his hustling propensities, Bob did not understand telegraphy. He glanced at the rack of levers; two were down, the block was open. Looking out of the window he saw that it was an up-train that was due.

"Well, I can close the block after it passes," thought Bob, "and I'll kick up such a row with that telegraph key that the fellows in the Rushmore tower will guess that something is wrong down here."

The thought had scarcely crossed his mind when he heard a team come dashing furiously across the bridge.

"Hello, up in the tower, hello!" shouted a man, looking out from behind the curtains of a buggy.

It was Mr. Wendell. Bob recognized his voice, although he could not see his face.

"Hello!" he shouted. "For heaven's sake come up here, the tower man is dead!"

"Can't!" cried Wendell, evidently not recognizing Bob. "Did you see a team go by here a few minutes ago?"

No team had passed that way that Bob knew anything about and he said so. Instantly Mr. Wendell drew in his head and the buggy went dashing on across the track, passed up the hill and disappeared around the bend in the road.

"Hoo—hoo! Hoo—hoo! Hoo—hoo!"

One more the cry of the lunatic was heard down the line of the swollen creek. Bob had no time to think about it, however, for a distant whistle warned him that the approaching train was already half way through the block and must soon go thundering by.

"I'd better stop it," he thought. "If Rushmore don't get the signal there's no telling what may happen."

He seized the red flag and ran to the window. He was just about to unroll his flag when another most vivid flash of lightning came. Bob gave a cry of horror, and, making one spring for the trapdoor, went rushing down the dark stairs.

What had he discovered? Let us follow him and see. For all he knew Bob hustled up the tracks toward the sharp curve around which the train must soon appear. A pile of ties! Yes, there it was, directly across the track. He ran like mad. Not even stopping to go around the ties, he sprang upon them, wild with anxiety, for now the broad band of light from the locomotive still hidden around the curve was thrown full upon him.

"They can see me better on top of the ties," thought the boy, and although the engine was still invisible, he began to wave his flag wildly. He was prepared to jump for his life, but as the engine swung around the curve, lighting up the track as bright as day, Bob's hair fairly stood on end with horror, for there, lying on the track just in front of the pile of ties on the side toward the approaching train, lay a young girl bound hand and foot. Her face was turned upward, her eyes were closed, to all appearances she was dead.

"Nellie Wendell!" gasped Bob.

"Hoo—hoo! Hoo—hoo! Hoo—hoo!" yelled the voice of the lunatic in the distance.

"Stop! Stop the train!" shouted Bob, wildly



waving his flag in the full glare of the engine's light.

#### CHAPTER IV.—Bob Saves Nellie's Life.

The whistle shrieked, the engineer's head came out of the cab window; he saw his danger and reversed the brakes. He saw the boy leap from the ties upon the track, throwing down his red flag as he went. If the engineer had been a cow-and he would in all probability have seen no more, for he would have jumped from the cab to his death.

But the good man was not a coward. He stuck to his cab and the fireman did the same. Both saw Bob raise up with the girl in his arms; saw him leap from the track and go tumbling over the bank of the swollen creek, which ran close to the railroad here. An instant later the train went crashing against the ties, but thanks to Bob's hustling, not hard enough to do any serious damage; the ties were pushed aside and even the engine held the rails. Right under the tower house the train stopped; the passengers were pretty well shaken up, but that was the worst of it. All was excitement. The conductor and brakemen were off the train in a moment. Several passengers followed them to see what it was all about, but there were plenty in the sleepers who never even knew that anything serious had happened. Poor Ettinger was found dead in the tower. The engineer told his story and every one was asking: "What became of the boy and the girl?" and it is this question that we must proceed to answer, leaving the train and the train people to take care of themselves.

When Bob made that wild jump with pretty Nellie Wendell in his arms he overdid the thing, for he jumped too far and went over the bank into the creek. Contact with the water revived the fainting girl and she began to scream and struggle. Poor Bob did his best, but it was an awful struggle on his part, too, and his nerves could have stood up against it if the girl had not been bound as she was.

"Keep quiet! Oh, keep quiet!" pleaded Bob, holding her head above water as best he could and swimming with his legs alone. He was trying to make the bank, which was only a few feet away, but the current was so swift that it kept throwing them back to the middle of the creek and the end was that Bob managed to land on a small islet about a quarter of a mile below the tower house. Bob caught at the trunk of a small tree and managed to hold on and then, with a great effort, pushed Nellie forward on to solid ground, coming ashore after her and sinking down by her side all out of breath.

"Bob Somers, is it you?" gasped the girl. "Oh, this will kill me! I shall never get out of this alive!"

"Yes, you will, yes you will," said Bob. "Now, keep cool and it will be all right. Give me just a moment to pull myself together! There, I'm better already! Now I'll set you free!"

Out came Bob's knife and Nellie's bonds were cut. Scarcely a word was spoken. The poor girl seemed very weak, and in a moment she fainted away altogether. Once more Bob thought she was dead, and his heart sank, but still he kept on hustling, for that was his way. One minute to

think and then came action. Paying no attention to the shouts and cries over at the junction, Bob dove into the swollen creek and struck out boldly for the shore. His sharp eyes had spied a small boat drawn up under the shelving bank, which here was a great deal higher than it was near the tower house. Free to swim now, he had no difficulty in reaching the bank and to come back in the boat and convey Nellie Wendell over to the shore. It was hustle, hustle, hustle with this enterprising hero of ours, and he never stopped hustling until up on the turnpike which ran along the other side of the track.

Right ahead was a little shanty used by the railroad men as a tool house. Bob broke open the door without ceremony, and, placing Nellie in the solitary chair which the place contained, proceeded to light a greasy lamp before he would let her say a word.

"May I talk now?" she asked when Bob had lighted the lamp.

"Of course you may," Bob. "We are all right now. The only thing is to let you rest a moment and then to get you home."

"Oh, Bob, you have saved me from a horrible death!" cried Nellie, seizing his hand. "You have saved my life twice! Of course you want to know how I came there on the track. You have a right to know, Bob. I can't tell you and—and—oh, it's too dreadful to think about! Oh, take me home! Take me home! Don't let me get out of your sight until—Bob! Bob! Oh, don't leave me so!"

It was only more of Bob's hustling. He went dashing out of the tool house shouting, "Hey! Hey!" for a buggy was coming rapidly toward them along the road. Bob heard the buggy coming and thought at once that it might be Mr. Wendell back again, and so it was. The Congressman saw Bob run out into the road and, of course, the horse was reined in at once.

"What is it?" cried Mr. Wendell. "That you, Bob?"

"Yes, sir; your daughter is here in the tool house!" replied Bob; but he was wrong, for she wasn't. Nellie heard her father's voice and came running out to meet him.

It was a most affecting scene when the Congressman closed his arms about her.

"Oh, Nellie! Nellie!" he cried, and then Bob instead of waiting to be thanked and rewarded as another boy would have done, quickly stepped back into the tool house, blew out the lamp, pulled the door to and ran down the bank to the boat.

"Where is that boy?" demanded Mr. Wendell of his coachman a few moments later.

But it was a question to which he received no answer, for Bob had disappeared.

#### CHAPTER V.—Bob Goes into Business.

Of course all Brookville was talking about the affair at the junction next day. There had not been such excitement in town for many years. Bob went back to the town house and reported his part in the affair to the yardmaster, who, among a number of other railroad men, was on hand at the tower then. The train had gone on its way and Bob found he was quite a hero, for the engineer had told of what he saw. Everybody



wanted to talk about the affair at the junction and Bob had hard work to get away from them. It was a great relief to him when he found a woman on Cross Street who wanted a ton of coal put into her cellar. He pulled off his coat and went to work and was just about half through when a pair of spanking grays drawing a handsome carriage came dashing around the corner.

"I'm in for it, now," thought Bob, for he saw that it was Mr. Wendell's team and there was the Congressman himself sitting in the back seat. The carriage drew up at the curb and Mr. Wendell hailed the boy. "Come and get in here, Bob!" he said. "Take a ride with me. I want to talk to you!"

"I'm afraid you'll have to talk here, sir. I've got this coal to get in. I can't leave."

"Pshaw! Jump in. I won't keep you long."

"Can't do it, Mr. Wendell. This lady wants her coal in the cellar, besides I make it a point never to leave a job till it's finished. You wouldn't want me to leave a job of yours."

"By Jove! you're right," said Mr. Wendell, although he looked a little annoyed, too.

"Come, I like that," he added. "It does me good to see a hustler once in a while, but all the same, my boy, I've got to talk to you if you can spare a minute from your work."

It was impossible to refuse him now, and Bob stepped over to the carriage. "Don't thank me for what I did last night, sir," he said. "I don't like to be thanked. I only hope that Miss Nellie is not any the worse for what she went through with. It was a lucky thing that you came along just as you did."

"It was a lucky thing for my poor daughter that you were on hand to save her life," said Mr. Wendell. "Now, Bob, you have kept quiet about this affair. In spite of what you say I must thank you most heartily for the noble part you have played. Have no fear of being arrested. The president of the railroad is one of my most intimate friends and I have written him a letter explaining the affair. It will not be necessary for you to say a word."

"I certainly shan't, sir."

"That's right, but it does not settle the business. You have a right to know how my daughter came to be on the railroad track. If you insist upon an explanation I——"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Bob. "I don't want to know. Please don't tell me. I've got all I can do to attend to my own business, Mr. Wendell. I haven't the least desire to know yours."

"Thank you, Bob," replied the big man of Brookville, quietly. "You're a gentleman. Take this and understand that it does not begin to express the gratitude which Mrs. Wendell and I feel toward you. Come and see us any time. Our house is always open to you and—what! You won't take it? Boy, you must! It would break Nellie's heart if you refused. Drive on, James. See you later, Bob."

Away went the carriage, leaving Bob standing in the street holding a sealed envelope in his hand. He never opened it until he had finished putting in the coal. When his work was all done he went around into the alley and broke the seal.

There was a check for \$1,000 in the envelope, drawn to the order of Robert Somers—that was

all! Now Bob was proud, but he was also very poor. Should he accept the gift or reject it?

"I'll accept it as a loan," he resolved, "but I'll pay it back just as soon as I'm able. Now, that's settled and I must hustle about and see what I can do with this money. Brookville is as good a place as any other and I'm going to stay right here and let these people see what a hustler can do. I've got capital to work with now and if I don't double it inside of six months I miss my guess."

Now, that was Bob's resolve, but for several weeks no one knew anything about it, for he kept right on working about town in the old way. The only difference he made was in leaving the freight car and hiring a cheap room with a widow lady who took boarders down near the station. The \$1,000 check went into the Brookville bank and during those weeks Bob saw nothing of the Wendells, for they left town two days after the affair at the junction. So matters went on and Hustling Bob's popularity increased daily in Brookville until one afternoon everybody was surprised by seeing a handsome covered wagon drawn by two fine horses come dashing up to the depot driven by no less a person than Hustling Bob. It was open at the end and had two long cushioned seats capable of holding six people each running along the sides. It was gaily painted and the lettering on either side read:

#### BROOKVILLE AND DALTON

"Well, well, well!" exclaimed Squire Evans, who got off the up train, which had just come in. "This is what Brookville has needed for years! Who owns the team, Bob?"

"I do, sir," replied Bob, quietly. "It's all mine."

"Where did you buy it?"

"Oh, I picked it up in Albany and had it painted over. It's not new, but it will do very well to run people over to Dalton in, I think."

"Indeed it will! There's money in the business, too. So that's what took you down to Albany a while ago, is it? We were afraid here in town that you'd left us for good."

"Not yet. You can't shake me so easily, sir," laughed Bob, and he was just going to say more when a drummer with two enormous grips came out of the station.

"I want to get over to Dalton in time to catch the night train for Ogdensburg," he called. "Can you tell me, young man, where I can get a team?"

"Right here, sir," replied Bob, in his cool way.

"When do you go over?"

"Now; there's hardly time to catch the train, as it is, but I guess we can make it by driving fast."

"You're the style of hustler for my money," said the drummer, throwing his bags into the "stage," as Bob came to call his new vehicle later on. "Make that train and I'll pay you double fare, whatever that may be."

"Right you are. You shall get the train," cried Bob. "All aboard for Dayton!"

#### CHAPTER VI.—The Crazy Man in the Stage.

Bob made Dalton station in ample time for the train—indeed, there was ten minutes to spare.

"How much do I owe you?" asked the drummer,



who had shown himself a remarkable pleasant fellow during the lonely ride through the woods. "One cent, sir," replied Bob, jumping down to help the drummer with the grips.

"Nonsense, boy! What's your fare?"

"One cent from you. I'm going to keep it for luck. This is my first trip and you are my first passenger. If it wasn't that it's against my principles to do business for nothing, I wouldn't take anything at all."

"I'd rather give you a dollar, my boy," said the drummer.

"No, sir."

"But—"

"Just oblige me by letting me have my own way," laughed Bob, and the good-natured drummer gave him a cent and a cigar, saying, "You'll hear from me again if I ever come this way."

Bob expected to hear from more than one drummer and he was not mistaken by any means.

It took about two weeks for people to find out that the new way of getting into Albany existed.

In the early morning Bob carried over a lot of commuters, who could in that way catch the express instead of taking the slow way train, and he had them back again at night, of course. At noon the stage was generally well patronized by ladies who wanted to go into Albany for an afternoon shopping, something they had never been able to do before without making a day of it. As a rule they came back on the Dalton express, so Bob got them both ways, too. At the end of a fortnight Bob found himself making about three dollars a day above expenses. It was a red letter day for Bob, for when he went over to meet the train which reached Dalton at three o'clock who should step off the cars but Miss Nellie Wendell, escorted by a dudish young gentleman, who carried a new dress suit case and a bundle of golf sticks and canes.

"Heah, you fellah! Are you the Brookville stage driver?" he called out to Bob, who sat in his place on the box.

"All aboard for Brookville!" cried Bob, raising his hat to Nellie, but paying no attention to the young dude.

"Why, Bob! Is it really you? I'm delighted to see you!" exclaimed the Congressman's daughter, coming right up to the stage and holding up her hand.

"It's no one else," replied Bob, blushing as he pressed that dainty little hand. "I hope you are quite well, Miss Wendell. Have you any baggage? If you want to go over to Brookville I...."

"Why of course, I want to go over to Brookville and I am just as well as can be," broke in Nellie. "We heard there was a new stage from Dalton, so we came out on this train, but my baggage has been checked right through. Mr. Somers, let me introduce Mr. Percy St. George. Percy, this is Bob Somers I've told you so much about."

Nellie had climbed into the stage, refusing the assistance of Mr. Percy St. George, and she began rattling away to Bob, who took the dress suit case and golf sticks and put them on the little platform in front of his own seat without a word. They were just about to start when a shabbily dressed man, wearing a slouch hat

drawn over his eyes stepped hurriedly from the smoking car and climbed into the stage.

"Brookville, sir?" demanded Bob, for the man had not uttered a word.

"Yes," he growled, seating himself opposite to Nellie and Mr. Percy St. George.

He was a strange-looking person altogether and kept his head bent down so that nobody could see his face. As Bob took up the reins and drove away a strange silence seemed to come over Nellie Wendell all at once. If Bob had not been attending to his horses he would have noticed that the girl's face was deathly pale.

Mr. Percy St. George was too obtuse to notice the change which had suddenly come over his companion, however, and kept rattling away about happenings at Bar Harbor. Bob did not like it. He did not like the man and he did not like his talk nor did he like to start a conversation with Miss Nellie himself. The stage rolled out of town and was soon in the woods and still Percy St. George kept rattling on until all at once Bob was startled by that well-remembered cry:

"Hoo-hoo! Hoo—hoo!"

"Bob! Bob! Save me!" shrieked Nellie, before he could even turn his head.

There was the stranger standing up in the stage with a revolver in each hand. One was pointed at Mr. Percy St. George, who was in the act of jumping out behind, and the other aimed directly at Bob's head.

"He's mad! He's raving mad!" screamed Nellie. "Look out, Bob!"

"I own this stage! Get out of here, all but you, Nellie!" yelled the lunatic, firing point blank at Bob.

## CHAPTER VII.—Bob Saves Nellie's Life Again.

The time had come when Hustling Bob was to save Nellie Wendell's life a second time, and it was most fortunate for the Congressman's daughter that she had some one near who was ready and able to render her the assistance of which she stood so much in need.

"I'll kill you now, Nell!" yelled the lunatic, flourishing his revolver. "Say your prayers; your time has come!"

It was a wonder that his time did not come then and there, for Hustling Bob dropped the reins and made one leap over the seat, caught the crazy fellow by the throat with one hand and seized the revolver with the other. Nellie screamed and fell back upon the seat.

"Don't hurt him, Bob! Don't hurt him! He is my brother!" she cried.

Mr. Percy St. George meanwhile had jumped out of the stage and was yelling "Help! Help!" in the road, just as though that would do any good.

In the struggle the revolver was discharged and the report so frightened the horses that they went dashing off on a mad run, throwing Bob and the lunatic out backward into the road. It was a perfect wonder they were not killed, but in some way they managed to fall so that neither of them was hurt a bit. Bob wrenched the revolver away and staggered to his feet. The lunatic sprang up, and yelling wildly, made one dash for the woods and disappeared among the trees.



"Help! Help! The horses are running away! Help, Mr. Dwiver, or Miss Wendell will be killed!" bawled Percy St. George, running up to Bob and catching his arm.

"Oh, go to thunder, you idiot!" cried Bob, pulling himself away and off he dashed in pursuit of the stage, but without the slightest chance of overtaking it, which he certainly never would have done if it had not been for a ragged, bare-footed boy, who sprang out of the woods and planted himself in the road directly in front of the frightened horses. Bob could not see just how he did it, but next he knew the stage was at a standstill, with the boy holding the horses, waiting for him to come up. Nellie Wendell sat still, pale and trembling, but otherwise perfectly cool.

"Thank you a thousand times, Bob," she said, leaning out of the stage as Bob came hurrying up. "You have saved my life again and I shan't forget it, but please, please say nothing about this to a living soul."

The last words were spoken in a whisper, and Bob answered in the same tone:

"It is forgotten already, Miss Wendell, but you had better see to it that your friend back there holds his tongue."

"He's a wretched coward and I want nothing more to do with him," replied Nellie, blushing. "Give that boy this money. He is entitled to it for what he had done."

She slipped a five dollar bill into Bob's hand and he sprang into the stage, calling:

"Come up here, bub! We are ever so much obliged. It was downright brave for you to stop the horses the way you did. If you are going over to Brookville you may as well ride as walk."

The boy scrambled up beside Bob and his face beamed all over when he got the five dollar bill.

"Is all this for me?" he exclaimed. "I don't think I am entitled to it. What I did was just nothing at all."

"It's the lady who gives it to you, not me," replied Bob. "You can thank her for it. I'm ever so much obliged to you just the same."

"Don't wait for that fellow. Drive on, Bob!" cried Nellie, and Bob did drive on for a little way, much to Percy St. George's alarm.

"Hey! Hi! Stop! Don't go away and leave me!" he screamed. "I shall get lost in the woods! That dreadful man will shoot me. Stop, dwiver! Stop! I'll sue you for damages if you don't!"

"We'd better stop," said Bob, pulling in.

"I wouldn't. I'd go right ahead and leave him to get to Brookville the best way he can," replied Nellie, with flashing eyes.

"Yes, but this is a public stage. He has a right to ride," said Bob. "I hope it won't offend you, Miss Wendell, but I am going to stop."

The dude had a lot to say when he came puffing up to the stage and climbed in behind. He threatened Bob with the law and all sorts of things, and tried to apologize to Nellie for his cowardly conduct, but he got the cold shoulder both ways, for Nellie turned her back off him and Bob only laughed.

Little more was said until they drove into Brookville, when Mr. Percy St. George asked to be set down at the hotel.

"I suppose, Nellie, that after what has occurred I shall hardly be welcome at your house," he said.

"Still, I bear no malice and am willing to forgive you."

"Don't talk to me!" snapped Nellie. "You are my father's guest, not mine. If you want to come to our house I haven't a word to say."

Bob thought to himself that if he had been in the shoes of Mr. Percy St. George he should want to crawl away somewhere and hide himself, but the dude was evidently not so sensitive, for he remained in the stage and Bob drove them both up to Mr. Wendell's big house.

The last he saw of them Nellie was walking up the graveled path with Mr. Percy St. George trotting after her, carrying his dress suit case and golf sticks, looking more like an obedient little dog than a man. Thus what might have proved a very serious adventure ended in rather a trivial manner. Bob pumped on the box and drove around to the stable, taking the boy with him.

"Well, what's your name, young fellow?" he asked, as they rode along.

"Charley King, sir," replied the boy.

"Don't sir me. I'm not much older than you are. How old are you, anyhow?"

"I'm sixteen," said Charley, who was evidently a little afraid of Bob.

"Sixteen and a tramp already?"

"Well, that's what I am, but it ain't my fault."

"Yes it is. Why don't you hustle? There's no need of any one being a tramp who is willing to work."

"I'm sure I'm willing to work, sir—I mean mister. I hain't got no father nor mother. I've been kicked about ever since I can remember. I've always been working till about six weeks ago, when I ran away from Mr. Homer, over to Charlton. He beat me and kicked me and I just couldn't stand it, so I took to the road."

Bob said no more till they reached the stable, and then he told Charley to put the horses up and stood by and watched him while he did it. The little fellow showed that he was all right with horses, for he handled the team as well as Bob could have done it himself.

"Thank you, Charley," said Bob, after he was through. "Now you can go into Mather's restaurant and get your supper. After that come down to the stable again. I want to see you."

He handed Charley a quarter and the boy ran off, looking positively happy. Bob turned to his stage, for he always made it a point to beat the dust out of the cushions before he put it up for the night.

As he did so he saw Squire Evans over by the office of the livery stable laughing.

"Well, Bob," called the squire, "so you are at it again."

"At what, sir?" asked Bob, rather puzzled.

"Hustling, young feller, hustling."

"Oh, that's my regular game, sir. I'm always doing that."

And Bob began beating the cushions vigorously. "Hold on! I want to ask a question!" exclaimed the squire.

## CHAPTER VIII.—Hustling On.

Bob stopped beating. He had come to regard Squire Evans as one of the best friend he had in Brookville and, of course, he was curious to know what he had to say.



"Always glad to get a word of advice from you, Mr. Evans," he said, in his cheery way. "I didn't know you wanted to speak to me or I wouldn't have tried to smother you with dust."

"That's all right, Bob. What about that boy?"

"I picked him up on the Dalton road, sir. He's only a tramp. Why do you ask?"

"Because I heard you tell him to come back again after he had eaten his supper. Any notion of hiring him to work for you, Bob?"

"Well, I had, sir. He seems to be handy with horses, and——"

"Do you need a helper?"

"Well, not exactly."

"I thought not. You are entirely able to run the stage alone?"

"Certainly I am, sir, but——"

"Hold on. I want to get at the bottom of this business. Why do you think of engaging help which you don't need?"

"Why, it's just like this, Mr. Evans: no man ever got rich yet working with his own two hands. My idea is that if you want to get ahead in the world you have got to profit by the labor of others. If I can break that boy in to drive the Dalton stage satisfactorily to my customers for a price which I can afford to pay him, it will leave me just so much time to do something else."

That night Bob took little Charley King to his own room and had a long talk with the boy. He found him bright and intelligent and very grateful for the kindness Bob seemed disposed to show him.

"Why, certainly I'll drive the stage," he said. "I'll like nothing better. If you'll give me the chance I promise you I'll do my best every time."

"I'll give you three dollars a week and your board to make the morning trip," said Bob. "The afternoon trip I'll make myself for the present, but you will have to take care of the horses when I come in."

Charley jumped at the offer and the matter was so arranged. The fall drifted by and the winter passed and still Bob and Charley drove the stage together, and a very good thing Bob made of it, too.

Owing to the windings of the deep ravine which the railroad followed, it was quite a long ride from Dalton to Brookville, but Bob, by following the road which led down into the ravine and then striking across the tracks at Monsey, was able to reduce the distance nearly a third, and he ordinarily arrived at Brookville depot but little behind the express train, which he went to Dalton to meet. During the winter the Wendells went to Washington and Bob saw nothing of Nellie, the great house on the hill remaining closed.

Nor did he see much of Squire Evans, either, and we may add right here that the squire never alluded to the interview in the stable yard until long after the opening of the spring. How did Bob improve the spare time which he gained by hiring Charley King to drive for him? Why, by hustling, of course. Could Bob Somers do anything else? The first thing he did was to buy another team of horses—there was still money enough left in the bank for that, and, with these, he started a teaming business which proved immensely profitable before the winter was out, for Bob was now a general favorite among the tradesmen on Main street and soon secured all their business, for the only other man in town who did teaming was a miserable drunken fellow, who

was always getting into trouble. It was no trick at all to get the business away from such a man as Sam Carter, and along about the first of March he gave it up, sold his horses to Bob and went off to Albany. Then Bob got the mill business, too, and found himself clearing about \$12 a day on trucks and stage over and above all his expenses, including his own board and Charley King's.

So much for hustling. It was now a little less than a year since Bob Somers walked into Brookville an unknown tramp. Some might say it was luck, but it is not so. If Bob had not been a hustler he would not have stayed a week in Brookville, and if he had kept right on tramping where would have been his luck? So things went on until one day in May, as Bob was returning from the station with a load of stuff for the mill, Squire Evans put his head out the window of his office and shouted:

"Hey, Bob! I want to see you when you've got time."

"All right, sir," shouted Bob. "I'll be through in about an hour."

"Come up to the office, then," returned the squire, closing the window.

"I wonder what he wants now?" thought Bob, but he did not find out that day, for when he called at the office he found a note from Squire Evans stating that he was very sorry, but he had been unexpectedly called to Rushmore and that Bob was to call in the first thing next morning, which you may be very sure he did. As he was hurrying up the stairs he was startled by hearing loud words on the floor above.

"You're a fraud!" a voice shouted. "You're a blamed fraud! You will rob me of my rights, will you? I'll show you——"

"Help! Murder!" came the cry in Squire Evans' voice.

It was enough to start Bob hustling. With one bound he gained the hallway above and burst in at the squire's door.

## CHAPTER IX.—Is This Trouble For Bob?

The sight which met Bob Somers' gaze when he went bursting into Squire Evans' office was a startling one, it must be allowed. The squire lay stretched upon the floor, holding at arm's length a young man whom Bob knew very well by sight. The lawyer had managed to catch him by both wrists, and it was well that he did so, for the fellow held a long-bladed wicked-looking knife in his hand and was trying the best he knew to get an opportunity to strike.

Here was a good time for hustling, and Bob hustled for all he was worth. With one quick leap forward he sprang upon the fellow's back and pulled him over upon the floor, at the same time wrenching the knife from his grasp and giving it a toss over into the corner. The man was up like a shot, and, with a savage oath, made a rush for Bob. This meant fight, but Bob was ready for him, for he hauled off and dealt a stinger between the eyes, which sent him reeling back against the wall, jumping on him like lightning then and catching him by both arms. It would have to be a good man who would get away with Bob when he got such a hold as that.

"Call help, squire!" cried Bob. "I can hold



him. Send for the constable. This fellow must be taken in."

"No; throw him out, Bob. He's drunk. He don't know what he is about."

"Oh, come, if you say that I can throw him out, all right," chuckled Bob, and before the fellow knew where he was at Bob whirled him around and kicked him through the door. Of course he didn't take it quietly; of course he said things and tried to do things, and then he got another taste of Bob's foot and went tumbling head over heels downstairs.

"Come up here again and I'll give you another dose, Wehrle!" shouted Bob, and then, before he could say another word, Squire Evans caught him by the shoulder, pulled him into the office and locked the door.

"That's enough, Bob," he said, very quietly, considering the circumstances. "You've done nobly. You've saved my life, but, my boy, it's a good thing to know when to stop."

"It seems to me I'm always saving somebody's life," panted Bob. "Wehrle may come back again. You had better let me finish the job and have him arrested for assault."

"No, no! Not on any account!" replied the lawyer. "This is a matter which should not be made public. So you know him, it seems?"

"I know him by sight, sir."

"Very good. Sit down there, Bob, and let's be calm. A miss is as good as a mile, and I didn't get Wehrle's knife between my ribs, thanks to you. Well, what do you know about this young man?"

"I know that he almost always drunk and when he isn't driving fast horses he is playing poker, and—"

"And that's enough. Probably you know also that he owns the new stone quarry on the hill?"

"Of course, sir. Everybody knows that."

"Just so, but everybody does not know that John Wehrle is the son of one of my most intimate friends and that I represent the holders of the mortgage on the stone quarry, which I am about to foreclose."

"That's news to me, sir."

"That's news to you? Very well. Here is more news, then. This foreclosure takes place by the special orders of the young man's father. He has been neglecting his business and running in debt and making a fool of himself generally, and it is his father's wish that he shall be made to face the consequences. For carrying out my orders I am called a fraud and an attempt is made to murder me. That's the reward a man gets for attempting to do his duty; but let that drop. Now to business. This is the matter I alluded to that night in the stable yard last fall. Bob, can't you guess why I wanted to see you?"

"No, indeed, I can't," replied Bob. "I've puzzled my brains trying, but I can't guess."

"I want you to buy that stone quarry. There's a fortune in it for a hustling fellow like you. It's the chance of a lifetime. There is a demand for all the stone that can be taken out in Albany and Troy, and if a smart business man takes hold of the enterprise a good outside trade might be easily worked up."

Bob looked at Squire Evans half aghast.

"How in the world am I going to buy the quarry, sir?" he asked.

"Buy it at the foreclosure sale," replied the

lawyer; "that takes place on the steps of the town hall at noon to-morrow. I doubt if there are any other bidders but myself, and I am obliged to bid the face of the mortgage for the property."

"That means that I can get it for the face of the mortgage?"

"Yes; practically so. One dollar advance will take it unless there happens to be some one else after the property, in which case you probably would not be in it, as the boys say."

"I guess not. What is the face of the mortgage?"

"Four thousand dollars."

"That knocks me out."

"Not at all. All that the terms of the sale demands is a thousand dollars down; a new mortgage can be given for the balance to run say for five years, which would give you plenty of time to develop the property."

"But the thousand dollars?"

"How much money have you, Bob?"

"About five hundred, outside of my horses and trucks and the stage. I don't want to sell those."

"Certainly not. They pay, don't they?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Never sell out on a paying investment. You can borrow the money."

"Who would lend it to me? Besides, I don't want to be in debt to any man."

"That's nonsense. You once told me that no man can get rich working with his own two hands, and now, I tell you that no man can get rich without capital. If you haven't got capital borrow it. It's a smart man who knows how to run in debt scientifically. Go right down to the bank and ask Mr. Lord, the president, to lend you five hundred dollars on your note, with interest, for one year."

"You have spoken to him for me?"

"No."

"He knows nothing about the scheme?"

"Nothing."

"Do you think he would lend it to me?"

"Go ask him. Prove the proposition for yourself and then come back and let me know the result and we'll discuss the next move."

"I'll do it!" cried Bob, fired with enthusiasm, but I must see the quarry first. I must look into the thing a bit."

"Certainly. Take your time. I can have the sale postponed for a week. Go down to the bank now."

Bob opened the door and, forgetting all about Wehrle, ran downstairs with such haste that he nearly knocked over a tall man who was walking along the street.

"Oh, I beg your pardon!" exclaimed Bob, and then he sprang back with a quick gasp.

He was not quick enough, however. The tall man reached out and seized him by the collar.

"Ha! I've got you at last, Bob Richards!" he exclaimed. "Well, well, this is luck!"

## CHAPTER X.—Bob's Narrow Escape.

Poor Bob stood like one paralyzed in the grasp of the tall man. His face was as white as a sheet, his voice as he responded was thick and husky. That he was terribly frightened we do not pretend to deny.

"For heaven's sake, Mr. Connors, let up on me!"



he whispered. "I am living quietly here. I'm doing nobody any harm. Have some mercy and let me go."

The man Connors gave a wicked leer and let go Bob's arm.

"Don't you try to run," he hissed. "You stand where you are, or I'll shout right out and let every one know what you have been and what you are now."

Bob leaned back against the building and made no attempt to move.

"What do you want of me?" he demanded. "Do you mean to take me back to Janesburg? You have no right to. It is out of the State."

"Haven't I?" sneered the other. "Well, I've got extradition papers signed by the Governor in my pocket, all right, and a warrant, of course. I guess I can take you out of the State all right. You seem to forget that I am an officer, but I'll tell you one thing, Bob; I didn't come to Brookville expecting to see you."

"Well!"

"Cool as ever. Well, I did see you going into that building and I saw you again when you threw that fellow out. He has told me of the bold game you have been playing here, and—well, I may as well come to the point. There isn't any money in my dragging you back to Janesburg. I'm to be bought off."

"What's your price?" asked Bob, in a husky voice.

"Five hundred dollars."

"Good heavens, Connors! What are you thinking about?"

"Bleeding you, my boy. That's what's weighing heavily on my mind just now. You'll pay all right."

"Never! I am innocent. Still, I can't prove it, and I am as weak as the next one. I'll pay you a hundred dollars to go about your business and let me alone."

It was weak of Bob, but we all have our weakness, and we propose to describe our hero just as he actually was. Connors gave a chuckling laugh.

"A hundred dollars won't do, my boy," he said. "Not by a jugful. I've named my price."

"I can't pay it, and I won't."

"Then I can take you back to Janesburg and I will."

"Never, at that rate. I'll fight first. I've got friends in this town who will stand by me. I'll appeal to them."

"Try it! try it!" cried Connors, angrily. "How long do you suppose they'll stand by you when before the justice of the peace. I'll drag you before the justice of the peace. I'll see the sheriff and fix the thing with him in three minutes. Make terms with me now, or I'll grab you where you stand and holler right out here in the street."

How can we describe the thoughts which chased each other through the brain of Bob Somers then. He longed to turn on his tormentor. His fingers fairly itched to "lay him out" then and there, as he could easily have done if he chose. Is it necessary to say that he didn't dare? Hardly. Bob was thoroughly frightened now.

"I shall have to give up all idea of buying the quarry," he thought. "I shall have to pay him what he seeks; there is no other way."

Then he turned on Connors and said in that same husky voice:

"Well, suppose I give you the five hundred dol-

lars? What guarantee can you give me that you will go about your business and leave me alone, and that I shan't be bothered with you again?"

"I'll give you my word as a gentleman."

"You're not a gentleman, and I wouldn't take your word under oath."

"You are complimentary."

"I'm giving it to you straight, Connors. You've got me in a tight box, I'll admit, but I don't want to get into a worse one. I'd rather abandon all I've got and run away."

"Providing you can get the chance, and that's just what you can't get. Yes, or no? I'm going to bring this business to a head right now."

Crowded to the wall, so to speak, poor Bob was just about to yield when all at once who should he see coming toward him down the street but Mr. Wendell. Like a flash the Congressman's last words to him came into his mind:

"If ever you are in trouble, Bob, come to me."

Bob knew of no worse trouble that it was possible for him to get into than he was in now.

"I'll do it!" he determined, and he suddenly broke away from Connors and rushed up to Mr. Wendell.

"Why, Bob! I'm glad to see you!" cried the Congressman. "How are you? How have you been? But what on earth ails you? Why, you are as pale as a ghost."

"I'm in trouble, Mr. Wendell," began Bob. "I want your help. I——"

He knew that Connors was close behind him, and his heart sank as he felt the fellow's grasp upon his arm.

"Hold on, there!" cried Connors, roughly, his red face all the redder with haste and excitement. "I don't know who you are, mister, but I've got something to say about this here boy!"

"Let go of me!" flashed Bob, pulling away. "Mr. Wendell, I——"

"Hold up!" snarled Connors. "Listen to me first off, boss. This boy is a——"

He got no further. Suddenly, without an instant's warning, he gave a sharp cry and fell all in a heap to the sidewalk.

"Bob! What is this?" cried the Congressman, and immediately a crowd began to gather about them.

"I don't know!" gasped Bob. "Oh, Mr. Wendell, stand by me. I'm in deep trouble. This man——"

"Will trouble you no more!" broke in Mr. Wendell. "It's a case of heart disease, if I know anything; the man is dead."

Dead. If a hundred-ton weight had suddenly been taken off his head Bob could scarcely have felt more relieved, for Connors lay stretched upon the sidewalk, and never moved.

## CHAPTER XI.—"I'm Trying Live It Down."

"Who is he, Bob?"

It was Squire Evans who put the question, for it happened that the squire was coroner at Brookville, and also justice of the peace. The man who had tried to blackmail Bob was really dead, and the body lay stretched out upon the lounge in the rear of Brynton's drug store. The doctor had examined it and pronounced the cause of death an old heart trouble. The crowd which had thronged into the drug store had satisfied their curiosity



and gone away, and now Dr. Phelps, Squire Evans, Mr. Wendell and Bob stood there alone in the little room, as Mr. Brynton had gone to wait on a customer outside. Bob was cool enough now, and quite ready for the question which he knew was bound to come.

"His name is Connors," he replied. "He is a Pinkerton detective, and his home, I believe, is in Pittsburg, Pa. That is all I know about the man."

Squire Evans wrote down the name and Dr. Phelps did the same.

"You didn't get to the bank yet, I suppose?" asked the lawyer, turning to Bob.

"No, sir. I was on my way there when this man stopped me. I'll go now just as soon as I've said a word to Mr. Wendell. I'll be back in the office in a little while."

Squire Evans then withdrew and Dr. Phelps went with him. As soon as they had departed Mr. Wendell, who had been singularly quiet through it all, turned to Bob.

"Well, my boy!" he said, placing his hand on Bob's shoulder, "and what have you got to say to me now?"

"Nothing," replied Bob.

"I thought so. The danger departed with that man's life."

"Temporarily, at least, sir," replied Bob, wearily. "It will strike me again, though. I can't escape it. I think I had better leave town."

"Bob!"

"Sir."

"Answer me truly, for I am your friend. You have put me under the deepest obligations to you, and I don't forget. Have you committed any crime?"

"No, sir! As heaven hears me, I have not."

"That settles it," said Mr. Wendell. "I shouldn't think of asking one question after that. Step outside here. You don't want anything further to do with this man, I presume?"

"Indeed I don't, sir. He was my most bitter enemy."

"That's enough. The words you spoke to me in your excitement will never pass my lips. I am glad for your sake that things turned out as they did."

Bob followed Mr. Wendell out into the drug store then. He was pretty well shaken up and his only idea was to get away.

This, however, was not to be. Mr. Wendell immediately began questioning him about his affairs, and he did it in such a nice way that Bob could not help telling him all about the quarry.

"It's a good thing," said the Congressman. "I advise you to go into it. How much money do you want?"

"How much should you think I needed, sir?" asked Bob.

"Oh, about two thousand dollars," replied Mr. Wendell, carelessly.

"Oh, no, sir. I've got five hundred. All I need is five hundred more."

"Never ask a man's advice unless you intend to follow it, Bob. Now, look here; you can't run that quarry on wind. You've got to start right in order to come out right, and to do the last you have got to have working capital. A thousand dollars is little enough."

"But I don't want to run in debt to any such amount, sir."

"Then don't go into the thing at all. Many a good enterprise which ought to have proved a success has turned out a dire failure for want of sufficient capital. That's my experience; but you can do just as you please."

"But who would lend me any such a mount? I was going to the bank to try and raise five hundred on my note, when this happened, but—"

"But you needn't go now. You don't have to. I'll lend you the money on your note, Bob."

"Oh, I couldn't take it, sir. I couldn't think of anything of the sort."

"But you must. I insist on it, or better still, I'll endorse your paper, and take a second mortgage on the quarry to secure me. That will be a strictly business transaction. Come, we'll go right into the bank and settle it now, and I want you to understand that I consider it a perfectly safe investment."

Bob was quite overcome.

"Perhaps you would think differently if you knew what that man in there knew," he faintly said.

"Stop!" cried the Congressman. "I know one thing, Bob; yes, two!"

"Yes, sir?"

"First, I know that you are a hustler; second, I know that I have your word for it that you have committed no crime, and third—yes, there's another, Bob, I know that I am under obligations to you, that—"

"Stop, Mr. Wendell. Don't say any more."

"I'll stop on one condition only, Bob, and that is that you come right along with me to the bank. I'm in a hurry, and I must settle this matter up before I attend to anything else."

It was a strange turn of affairs, certainly. Inside of an hour from the time when Detective Connors caught hold of Bob's arm and the boy thought it was all up with him, he found himself in position to launch out as one of the business men of Brookville. But for all that it was some time before Bob got over his scare and recovered his usual good spirits. Two or three pleasant interviews with Nellie Wendell may have helped. Bob met the girl on the street, and once he drove her to Dalton. Each time Nellie renewed her invitation for Bob to call on her, but our young hustler, was proud and he only thanked Nellie and turned it off. The body of Detective Connors was claimed by his relatives in Pittsburg, and taken away. It cannot be denied that Bob breathed more freely when he saw the box put on board the cars, and for days he lived in a state of anxiety and eyed every stranger who got off the train.

Mr. Wendell noticed this, and spoke of it.

"Don't worry now, Bob," he said one day at the station. "If trouble strikes you, remember, I am behind you. Whatever this business is, live it down, I say! Live it down."

"I'm trying to live it down, sir," replied Bob, his eyes filling with tears.

The kind-hearted Congressman took the boy's hand and shook it heartily. If he thought he was going to get Bob's confidence then he was mistaken, for the boy simply said: "Thank you," and then jumped on his truck and drove away.



## CHAPTER XII.—Bob's New Business Takes a Start.

Bob now found himself in a position to do just as he pleased about the quarry, but he would not hear of buying the property until he was all ready to act, so Squire Evans had the sale postponed two weeks, pending which the quarry was closed, for young Wehrle went out of town on the day of his assault upon Squire Evans and had not shown himself since. Bob's first act was to take a run out to the quarry and look over the plant. Of course, he was no judge of building-stone, but he was pleased with the appearance of things, and Mr. McIntyre, the foreman, assured him that the supply of granite was inexhaustible, and of a very superior quality.

"I don't know about your buying it," he said, "but I know I'd buy this quarry mighty quick if I could find anybody to back me up."

There was a substantial house on the ground for the accommodation of the quarrymen, which went with the plant, but this was all that did go with it beside the land, except the stationary engine and the big crane for hoisting stone. Within three days parties came up from Albany and took possession of the horses, trucks and tools which had been sold to them by young Wehrle. Bob then saw the wisdom of Mr. Wendell's judgment, for, of course, all these things had to be replaced by whoever intended to run the plant.

At last the day of sale came. Bob was prepared. He had been to Albany and submitted samples of the stone to two prominent architects, both of whom had assured him that it was sure to meet with a ready sale.

When Squire Evans called for bidders on the courthouse steps there was, as he had anticipated, no one present, for Bob had put his bid in the squire's hands, and following his advice, kept away. The squire made the usual three calls for bids, and none being there to respond, the quarry was knocked down to Bob at one dollar above the face of the mortgage.

"How shall I make out the transfer, Bob?" asked the squire, when Bob called at his office later in the day. "Your name is Robert Somers, I suppose, but if you have a middle name it wants to go in."

Bob turned pale.

"I suppose I must give my full name," he said.

"Certainly you must, or the transfer won't be legal," replied the squire, looking up in surprise.

"But it is Robert Richards," replied Bob.

"What!" cried the squire, laying down his pen.

"Well?" said Bob, turning paler than ever now.

"I've heard that name before," said the squire, slowly. "Did you ever live in Pennsylvania. Bob?"

"Yes, sir,"

"Janesburg?"

"Yes, sir."

Bob got as white as death.

"This matter can go off, if you say so, Mr. Evans," he said hollowly; "but I can't answer any more questions about my private affairs."

The squire chewed the end of the pen for a moment, and then said, quietly:

"No; it stays on. I haven't forgotten what

you did for me, Bob. I just want to ask one question more."

"Ask it, sir," replied Bob, his voice trembling so that he could scarcely speak.

"Were you guilty?"

"No, sir! As heaven hears me, I am innocent."

"That's enough. I believe you," said the squire. "I'll fill up the papers right away, but let me give you a word of advice."

"To live it down, sir? I am doing that as hard as I can."

"No; you misunderstand me. Choke it up! Let me take your case in hand. Don't hide here under an assumed name, for sooner or later they will find you out."

"I'll think of it," replied Bob, and as turned away and hurriedly left the office.

"I can never choke it," he muttered, he ran downstairs. "I shall have to face the music in the end."

He thought he was going to have to face it that very afternoon, when Charley King drove the stage in from Dalton. A large, rough-looking man stepped out and made a rush for Bob, who was talking to Mr. Leaver, the station agent, at the time.

"You're the fellow they call Bob Somers," he exclaimed, quickly.

Poor Bob started and turned pale.

"I am," he stammered.

"You're just the one I want to meet, then. Come along with me!"

The man clapped a heavy hand on Bob's shoulder and started to draw him to one side.

"What do you want?" demanded Bob, pulling away. "How dare you put your hand on me! I tell you, I——"

"What the blazes is the matter with you?" cried the big man. "Are you crazy? I want to arrange with you for a hundred tons of granite from the quarry you have just bought."

"Oh!" gasped Bob. "I thought—never mind. I am hardly open for business. We are not quite ready yet, but I'll hustle the stone right out for you. I've got granite to sell."

"Gee! you're a queer fellow!" said the big man. "One would have supposed that you took me for a detective, after you for some crime."

## CHAPTER XIII.—Hustling On Quarry Work.

"Never mind what I thought. I'm here to sell stone."

"That's the way to talk. I was a little rough with you, I suppose. You'll get used to my way, though, and used to my money, too. My name's Flynn—Mike Flynn. I've got a contract for a big building in Troy. I pay cash for everything I buy."

By this time Bob had quite recovered himself and he replied with his usual business-like air:

"That's all right, Mr. Flynn. You must excuse my nervousness. I have not been very well of late and I took you for some one else. How much stone do you want to buy?"

"That depends. Have you any dressed?"

"No; the fact is, I have only just bought this



quarry. There's no one up there, but Mr. McIntyre, the foreman."

"You know nothing about the business I'm told."

"That so."

"And you have no capital to run it with. You have just bought the quarry on spec?"

"That isn't so."

"I was told it was."

"You were told wrong. I have all the money I need and can get as much more as I want."

"That so?"

"Yes."

"I was told differently."

"Excuse me, Mr. Flynn, but if you don't want to come down to business I've got something else to do," replied Bob. "I've got to hustle and I've no time to talk."

"That's all right, my boy. Come over to the hotel and have a drink; we can't talk business here at the station."

"No; I don't drink. This business can be settled in two minutes; the question is, do you want to buy stone, if so, how much and what price are you willing to pay?"

"Well, I want enough to fill the specifications on the building business; as for prices, I don't make them for the people I buy goods of. That's for you to do."

"You're right. You want an estimate for the stone the specifications call for."

"That's it."

"You shall have it."

"When?"

"When do you want it?"

"By Saturday."

"All right. I'll see that you get it that day. Where can I get the plans and specifications of this building?"

"Why, I've got them here," replied Flynn, pointing to a roll of paper which he carried in his hand, "but if you will allow me, I'd like to say a word."

"Fire away. I'm not stopping you."

"I was going to propose to put men on at the quarry for you and get out the stone on my own account, paying you a lump sum as profit. Would you entertain any such proposition as that?"

"I might."

"It would be quicker for me and easier for you. You see, I'm a stonecutter by trade. I know all about the business."

"Don't you want to see the stone first?"

"No; I've used it before many times. It was put in the specifications at my request. If I can't come to terms with you, I shall have the specifications changed so that some other kind can be used."

"There will be no necessity for that. You can come to terms with me. Where is your office?"

"No. 188 River street, Troy."

"All right. I'll call on you at noon Saturday and give you price and a time limit for the delivery of the stone. You can then make me an offer to get the stone out yourself and I shall be prepared to agree on one proposition on the other. There's no need for any delay."

"That's business!" exclaimed the contractor. "Here are the plans and specifications. There's nothing to hinder me from getting the next train back."

"Nothing whatever," replied Bob. Accepting the roll from Mr. Flynn, he shook hands and hurried away.

Now, although Bob had put on a bold front, he was somewhat doubtful about being able to carry out his agreement with Mr. Flynn. The business was entirely new to him. When he got to his room, spread the plans out on the table and read the specifications, he found that he could not make head nor tail of them, but for all this he was prepared.

He accordingly rolled up the plans and drove out to the quarry. The only person there was Mr. McIntyre, who resided with his family in a small cottage near by. Bob showed him the plans and told the whole story. "Can you help me, Mr. McIntyre?" he asked.

"Not in the least," was the reply. "I'm a practical stonecutter, but I don't know anything about building. You had better let this slide or take up Flynn's offer. He's a square man, as far as I know."

"I shall do nothing of the sort," replied Bob, promptly. "Mr. McIntyre, how many tons of stone do these plans call for? At least you can tell me that."

"Certainly I can't. I don't understand plans, as I told you."

"Then you can't help me?"

"Not at all."

"All right. Good-day," said Bob, rolling up the plans.

"What are you going to do?" asked the foreman.

"Hustle and find some one who can," replied Bob, and three minutes later he was on the way to the station, where he caught the train for Albany, at which place he arrived in time to insert an advertisement in all the morning papers, which read as follows:

"WANTED—A competent man to estimate on stone work for builders. First-class men only need apply to R. S., City Hotel, before 10 a. m.

Next morning brought several letters, but only one applicant, a tall, thin man of about thirty, whose face wore a confident air and he gave the name of Mabie. Bob questioned him and found that he had been in charge of a large quarry in Massachusetts for a number of years and had lost his place on account of the failure of the company. He offered as references his former employers and several Boston architects.

"Call at two o'clock and I'll give you an answer," said Bob, without disclosing any portion of his business.

Mr. Mabie asked a few general questions and withdrew, but when he came again at two o'clock Bob engaged him as manager of the quarry, for the replies to the telegrams which he had sent to Mr. Mabie's references spoke of him in the highest terms. They returned to Brookville together and the following morning Bob drove Mr. Mabie out to the quarry, where the plans and specifications of the big building were gone over carefully. Mr. Mabie proved himself perfectly competent to make the estimate and had it ready the following morning.

"I can get everything in running order here in a week's time," he declared. "There's a good three thousand dollars' profit in that contract at



our figures. Still, if Flynn offers you more I'd accept it and we will start right in and open up a new ledge. You've got a good thing here, Mr. Somers. There is no reason on earth why you shouldn't make money. Even if you lose this contract don't worry. There are plenty of others to be had."

This was Friday, and next morning Bob started for Troy by the first train, leaving Mr. Mabie to get things in shape at the quarry. The train had scarcely started when a well-dressed man, whom Bob had noticed as a stranger at the station, left his seat and came over and sat down alongside of him.

"Excuse me," he said, "but your name is Somers, I believe."

#### CHAPTER XIV.—Captured at Last.

Bob's heart sank as he looked at the stranger. The recollection of those mysterious events in his past life came to his mind with a rush.

"Here's another detective," he thought. "I ought to have taken Squire Evans' advice. Sooner or later I've got to face the music and that means jail for a time, at least, but I would have liked to get the quarry running first."

Such were Bob's thoughts, but he concealed his agitation as best he could and replied, in a steady voice:

"Yes, sir, that's my name."

"So I thought," said the stranger. "My name is Travis. I came to town last night, too late to call on you, and when I did call this morning I was told that you were off for Albany, so as I wanted to see you I thought I'd come along, for there could be no better place to talk than on the train."

"Yes, but what did you want to talk about?" asked Bob. "I haven't the pleasure of your acquaintance, and—"

"No, just so," broke in Mr. Travis, "but I'll soon introduce myself. I'm a builder in New York. I hear that you've purchased the quarry Wehrle used to have up at Brookville. Is that a fact?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Bob, greatly relieved. "If you want any stone I'm your man."

"That's just what I do want. I'm figuring on a new hospital which is to be built in New York and your stone has been highly recommended to me. Are you in running order yet?"

"Shall be in a week."

"That's plenty of time. I shan't have to put my figures in to the architect for at least a fortnight and then, of course, I may not get the job."

"If you'll let me see your plans and specifications I'll give you a figure."

"Today? They are at my hotel in Albany."

"I should want the plans at least twenty-four hours."

"I see. You are not practical at the business."

"That's so, but I have a man at the quarry who is."

"Well, you can have the plans and mail them to me in New York, or still better, I'll call at the quarry on Wednesday next and get your estimate. I'd like to have a look at the stone."

"You will find your estimate all ready if you will do that," said Bob. "It will be the best way. I should like to have my Mr. Mabie talk to you."

I'm perfectly willing to admit that I don't know anything about the stone business, but I'm open for contracts and I don't intend to let grass grow under my feet."

"Yes, I've heard you were a hustler," said Mr. Travis, smilingly, and then they began to talk about general matters.

As the train rolled on Bob found Mr. Travis a most genial companion. The boy was so relieved to find that he was not a detective that he opened up to this stranger as he seldom did to any one. Mr. Travis, on his part, met him more than halfway. He seemed to be wonderfully well informed, and, according to his own account, had traveled pretty much all over the world. He was full of anecdotes of his travels, and Bob grew so interested in listening to them that they were in Albany almost before he knew it.

"We'll take a hack and go right around to my hotel and get the plans," he said. "It won't take long."

"I'm due in Troy at noon," replied Bob. "I had rather call when I come back."

"Pshaw! Why, you've got two hours yet. Here, driver! Bring your hack this way."

The man addressed sprang upon his box and drew up alongside of them, but Bob still hesitated.

"Where are you stopping?" he asked.

"At the Hudson House."

"Don't know it. Where is that?"

"Oh, it's up Broadway a piece—not very far. Come, jump in. I've got to go to Schenectady this afternoon and I can't meet you, anyhow."

Bob yielded and followed Mr. Travis into the hack. The ride occupied about ten minutes, and when they left the hack Bob was anything but pleased with the appearances of the hotel. To be sure, there was a big sign reading "Hudson House" over the windows, but it was easy to see that the place was nothing but a low-class saloon for all that.

"Come right up to my room," said Mr. Travis. "The fellow who runs this place is an old friend of mine; that's why I stop here."

Bob had gone too far to back out now, and he unhesitatingly followed his new acquaintance upstairs and into a dirty, ill-furnished room on the second floor in the rear. Not until Mr. Travis suddenly slammed the door and turned the key in the lock did the boy suspect the truth.

"You're my prisoner, Bob Richards!" exclaimed the supposed builder, whipping out a pair of handcuffs. "You're wanted in Janesburg, Pennsylvania, and I'm the man who is going to take you there!"

Bob turned as pale as death and made one rush for the window, which stood open. It was no use. Out went Mr. Travis' foot and down went Bob flat on the floor. The next he knew the handcuffs were snapped about his wrists.

#### CHAPTER XV.—The Unexpected Happens.

Helped to his feet by Mr. Travis, Bob dropped into a chair and stared at his captor with white face and trembling lips.

"Well!" said Travis, smiling all over. "I've got there, it seems. Been looking for you a long while, my boy. There, there, don't feel so cut up about it? Try a cigar? I'll put it in your



mouth and hold the match. What? Don't smoke? Well, I do. Now, then, let's be sociable, for we won't get a train on the D. & H. till one o'clock. I'm no brute, Bob. I want to make things as comfortable for you as I can."

While he thus rattled on Bob never spoke a word. Here was another detective, of course. It was hardly likely that this man would drop dead to accommodate him, as Detective Connors had done.

"Who are you?" asked Bob, as the man lighted his cigar and leaned back in a chair.

"Pinkerton detective," smiled Travis.

"Why do you want me?"

"Oh, I guess you know well enough."

"Why do you call me Richards when my name is Somers?"

"I guess you know that, too. Don't try to bluff, my boy."

"Look here," said Bob, "I'll admit here, where there are no witnesses, that my name is Richards and that I am probably the boy you want. Can this thing be settled up?"

"With me?"

"Yes."

"No, sir."

"I'm glad to hear you say so."

"Glad?"

"Yes."

"Then you don't want to bribe me?"

"No. I am prepared to go to Janesburg and face the music. I am innocent of any crime."

"Oh, certainly—of course."

"I am, although you may not believe it. I'll go to Janesburg, but I want to ask a favor of you first."

"Name it, my boy. If it can be granted it will be."

"Take off these handcuffs and take me to Troy. I've got an important business engagement there at twelve o'clock. After I've kept the appointment I'll go with you."

"I'd like to do it, Bob."

"Do it. I'll pay you well."

"Oh, you can't bribe me."

"I'm not trying to bribe you—this is business."

"But if you should change your mind and try to escape?"

"I shan't."

"What will you give?"

"All the money I have about me. Come!"

"How much is that?"

"Two hundred and fifty dollars."

The detective thought a moment.

"Well, I'll take the chances," he said, "but remember one thing. I'll shoot you dead on the spot if you try to escape. Those are my orders. It's Bob Richards, dead or alive."

In reply Bob simply held out his hands and the bracelets were removed.

"There!" he exclaimed. "Now I'm a man again. Come along to Troy."

"Cash first," said this detective, who could not be bribed. Bob counted out the money.

"Lend me ten dollars to pay my expenses around today," he said. "I've got plenty of money in the bank at Brookville. I'll pay you back."

Detective Travis tossed him over the bill, and, after a few remarks, led the way downstairs, first searching Bob to see if he had a revolver about him, which he had not. They spent the next hour walking about Albany. The detective

kept wanting to drink and Bob unhesitatingly followed him into saloon after saloon. As the whisky began to take effect Mr. Travis became confidential, and his stories grew larger and larger. Again and again he tried to question Bob, but finding he could get nothing out of him, he gave it up at last and they took the train for Troy, entering Mr. Flynn's office at precisely twelve o'clock.

"Ah, you're on hand, I see," said the contractor. "Well, are you prepared to bid?"

"I am," said Bob. "Mr. Flynn, let me introduce my friend, Mr. Travis."

Mr. Flynn nodded. Evidently he did not like Mr. Travis' looks very well. Bob pulled out his estimate and handed it over. The builder studied it carefully.

"Well, this is all right," he said. "Can you carry out the time part?"

"Yes."

"And deliver the stone as agreed?"

"Yes."

Travis started. "You had better be careful how you make any bargain like that," he whispered in Bob's ear, loud enough for Flynn to hear.

"I'll sign the contract," said Flynn, and he did so. "You'll hear from me in a few days," he remarked as Bob and the detective went out.

"By gracious, you've got a nerve!" exclaimed Travis, when they struck the street. "One would think you expected the unexpected to happen. Young man, you'll never see Brookville again."

"Perhaps not," said Bob, quietly, "but I propose to hustle to the last gasp. If I can't fulfil this contract my man up at the quarry can and must. As for the unexpected, it sometimes does happen, and—"

"Look out! Look out!" yelled a conductor on a passing car, and at the same instant there was a shouting overhead from the scaffolding of a new building, which Bob and the detective were passing at the time.

Bob jumped into the street and the detective probably would have followed him if he had been sober, but as it was he stopped short and looked up. Fatal look! Down came a heavy block of brownstone, and, to Bob's horror, he saw Mr. Travis fall to the sidewalk beneath it. The unexpected had happened!

"Is he dead?" panted Bob, as the workmen pulled the block of stone off the body of the unconscious man.

"Dead! Yes, of course, he's dead. Do you know him?" asked one of the men.

"No," said Bob, hoarsely, and pushing his way through the crowd he hurried down River street, never stopping till he had turned the corner at the Mansion House.

"Stop that boy! Stop him!" he heard some one shout then.

There was a crowd running down River street.

"He's not dead!" flashed over Bob.

His first thought was to run, but instead he opened the door of the Mansion House, slipped into the office and saw a crowd of men and boys go rushing by.

"He's not dead and he's offered them a reward to capture me," thought Bob. "What am I to do? Sooner or later this thing has got to be faced."



## CHAPTER XVI.—A Midnight Visitor.

Bob Somers was hustling in more senses than one. He was hustling to make a name and a place for himself in Brookville, and he was in a fair way to do it; he was also hustling all he knew to keep out of the penitentiary, and that was the truth. But what crime had Bob committed? None—absolutely none! It is time for us to come out boldly and assert our hero's innocence. As to what the boy was accused of we must let that develop as our story goes on. That memorable day in Troy Bob sat there in the Mansion House for an hour, expecting every moment to be arrested and not daring to show himself on the street. It was an awful situation. He realized now what a mistake he had made in paying Detective Travis money. If he ever had to stand up before a judge and jury this would not help him a bit if it came to be known.

The day wore on and no one appeared to arrest the young contractor. At last Bob ventured to leave the hotel. He made no effort to find out what had become of Travis, but went straight to the depot and took the train for Albany. No one interfering with him, he caught the last train for Brookville and slept in his own bed that night. The next day Bob did what he should have done long before, went straight to his good friend, Squire Evans, and, under the seal of confidence, related the story of his past.

"Is it possible that you are the notorious Bob Richards?" exclaimed the lawyer. "You amaze me! I can scarcely believe it now!"

"Mr. Evans, do you believe me when I declare before heaven as I hope for a hereafter that I am innocent of this crime!" cried Bob, impressively. "If you do, I'll fight this; fight it out and hustle right ahead. If you cannot believe me, no one can, and I'll give up, turn the quarry over to you and let you settle with my creditors and Brookville will never see me again."

The squire thought for a few moments and then arose and took the boy's hand.

"Bob, I believe you," he said; appearances are most awfully against you, but I believe that you are innocent and I want you to understand that I should not say so unless I mean it. Can I say any more?"

"No, sir; I suppose not. But you can advise me what to do, Mr. Evans. I've worked hard to build a place for myself here in Brookville, but I'm only a boy after all."

"That's so, and you are deserving of great credit," replied the squire. "Do you know anything about the Janesburg business that you haven't told me?"

"Nothing whatever."

"You have no idea who stole the money?"

"No more than you know, sir."

"And yet those bills were found in your pocket?"

"I know it. I have no idea how they came there."

"You would find it very hard to make a jury believe this, my boy. I'm sure I don't know what you can do unless the money could be recovered, and I suppose that's impossible after all this lapse of time."

"Then, if I'm caught——"

"You'll have to face the music, Bob. I'll act

as your lawyer, cheerfully, but I cannot encourage you to believe that I can get you free."

"What would you do if you were in my place, Mr. Evans?"

"Well," said the lawyer, after a few moments' thought, "I think, under the circumstances, I should turn the quarry over to some responsible person, Mr. Wendell, for instance, or myself, and let your man Mabie run it, and then——"

"And then go to State's prison and do my five years and pick up the business when the time is up," broke in Bob.

"That's it," said the squire. "It would be all over then."

"It's either that or drop everything and run away, I suppose."

"You have said it."

"Well," said Bob, "I'll think about it. Meanwhile, I'm going to take chances and stay right here waiting till they strike again."

"Which they will do, you may be sure. You have had two strangely narrow escapes. You can't expect another."

"I do expect it. I must expect it. I am innocent!" cried Bob, and then his feelings overcoming him, he hurriedly left the office and it was several days before Squire Evans saw him again.

Fortune favored Bob, as it always favors the honest, the upright and the industrious. A year passed and the expected blow did not come. In Bob's interest Squire Evans looked up the case of Detective Travis and found that the unfortunate man had sustained a serious brain injury and was in an asylum, quite out of his mind. At the end of the year the quarry had been almost paid for and was employing over sixty men. Bob now lived in a little house which he had built for himself at the foot of the hill, near the work, and Mabie lived with him. Charley King remained in town, Bob having sold out the stage line to him, to be paid for on instalments. Charley had made two payments already and was doing very well. Such was the state of affairs when, at twelve o'clock one dark, stormy night late in the month of October, Bob got another scare. Mabie had gone to New York on business for the quarry and Bob, who had been figuring a set of plans in his little office, was just about to blow out his light and go up to his house, when he heard a horse coming up the Brookville road at tremendous speed. Bob sprang to his feet, his heart beating wildly. Something seemed to tell him that trouble was in the wind.

"They are after me," he thought. "Shall I wake up the men in the boarding-house? Every one of them would fight for me to the last gasp, or shall I light out and wait till it blows over? I could take to the woods on the hill and they could never find me."

He seized his hat, flung open the door and started, but stopped again before he had gone a dozen yards.

"No!" he exclaimed, "I won't do it! I am innocent! I said I would stand and face the music the next time and so I will."

He stood there in the darkness listening to the howling of the wind and the rapid footfalls of the horse.

"There's only one, anyway," he muttered. "Perhaps it's Mabie back again—but no; that's impossible! Who can it be?"



He was not left long in doubt, for a few seconds later the horse came dashing into the yard. "Why, it's a woman!" gasped Bob. "It's Nellie Wendell. What can have brought her here at this time of night?"

#### CHAPTER XVII.—Chasing the Madman.

Bob was at the horse's side in an instant.

"Why, Miss Nellie! What in the world brought you away up here at the quarry on a night like this?" he cried.

"Trouble, Bob!" gasped Nellie. "Oh, I'm all out of breath. Don't stop to talk to me. You must fly! They are after you, Bob. You saved my life and I want to save yours. Mount this horse and leave me. Go now!"

The brave little girl sprang from her horse and threw the bridle to Bob.

"Quick, Bob!" she cried. "Why do you delay? I know all, but I will never believe you guilty. Never, never, never! Oh, Bob, I'm in trouble myself. Deep trouble, but—but, oh, Bob!"

It was a trying moment for Bob, for at this point Nellie began sobbing convulsively, saying again and again, "Go! go!"

"No," said Bob, stoutly. "No, I'm not going. I don't know how much you know about my affairs, but I tell you this much, I am innocent of any crime and I am not going to run away again."

"But they'll take you to prison, Bob. They came to father tonight to inquire about you. It is a sheriff from Pennsylvania and three detectives. I was in the next room and I heard all. They know who you are and they are going to arrest you. You see, the sheriff is an old acquaintance of father's. He used to live in Janesburg years ago and that is why this man came to him for information."

"And did your father give me away, Nellie? But, no, he could not have done that, for he knew nothing."

"He told them nothing, Bob, but it was not necessary. They know all about you. There was a detective who went crazy, it seems, but is sane now and he told them that he arrested you a year ago."

"I see! I see! And so you came to warn me, Nellie. Well, I shall never forget it. Let me tell you——"

"Tell me nothing, Bob. I'm the last one who ought to judge you. Oh, we are in such trouble ourselves. Such trouble, Bob!"

"I must go now if you put it that way," said Bob, firmly. "Get inside the office, Nellie. You will be safer there."

Without further hesitation Bob hurried off toward the house, where Edward Wendell now stood like a statue, looking down at them. He was tall and terribly emaciated, his clothes were mere rags and his feet bare. He wore an old battered high hat upon his head. All this Bob saw as he drew nearer. It is useless to pretend that the boy was not afraid; his heart beat wildly. He expected every instant to be shot.

"Good-evening, sir!" he called out. "How are you? I want to have a word with you."

"Words! Words! Words! What are words?" broke out the madman, throwing up his hands

and snapping his fingers. "I came down from the planet Jupiter to act, not to talk. Revenge is what I want and revenge I mean to have. To the winds with words! Proof! Let them be blown away!"

He folded his arms and stood facing Bob, who, to tell the truth, did not know what to do.

"Oh, you don't understand me," he said. "I'm from the planet Jupiter, too. If you'll just come into my house a minute I'll tell you something that you ought to know."

"Were you sent down for that purpose?" asked the madman, striding close to Bob.

"Yes."

"Did the mighty Jupiter himself send you? Old Jove, the King of the Universe? Was it he?"

"Yes. Come in, won't you?"

"Not while that she fiend who calls herself my sister stands there glaring at me. Tell her to be gone."

Nellie had not obeyed and gone into the office, as Bob had requested, and now, in an unlucky moment, the boy turned and called to her to do so. Instantly the madman sprang upon him from behind and dealt him a fearful blow in the back of the head. Bob fell, like a log.

"Too-hoo! Too-hoo! Too-hoo!" shouted Wendell. "I've got you now, Nell," and he made a wild rush for the poor girl, who stood as if paralyzed.

An instant later and he had her in his arms, lifting her into the saddle as easily as if she had been a baby. Then the madman sprang up behind her and went dashing off up the hill toward the woods, almost riding over Bob, who, scrambling to his feet, tried to seize the horse by the bridle as they fled past.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.—Bob Saves Nellie's Life Again.

It was destined to be a memorable night for Hustling Bob. He was to do some of the "tail-est" hustling he had ever done in his life before it was over. So far the fun had begun.

"Save me, Bob! Save me!" shrieked Nellie, as the horse dashed up the side of the hill.

Bob was dazed. Whether to try to follow on foot or to saddle his horse he hardly knew for the moment. Collecting his wits the best he could, he decided upon the latter course, and ran to the barn behind the house. He had scarcely got the door open before he knew that there was more trouble in store for him, for he could hear the clatter of many horses coming up the road.

"That's the sheriff," he thought. "Well, I've got to run away now. The matter has been decided for me. I fancy I shall give me the greatest old chase he ever had yet."

He flung the saddle upon the horse's back and had him bridled and outside in an instant.

"There he is!" shouted one, throwing the light of a powerful dark lantern upon Bob. "That's the boy. Surrender, Bob Richards! It's all the same to me whether I take you dead or alive!"

"You'll have to come and take me if you want me, Mr. Mason!" shouted Bob, defiantly. "I've got other work to do just now."

"Fire!" yelled the sheriff, and the bullets went whirling toward the brave boy, who crouched low in the saddle and went dashing up the hill.



It was a miss all around. So was the second volley and so was the third, and then Bob had the woods to cover him.

"Too-hoo! Too-hoo! Too-ho!" came the cry of the madman in the distance.

Bob turned his horse in the direction of the sound. He could hear the sheriff and his men crashing among the bushes after a moment and this, strange to say, gave the boy some encouragement, for he knew the woods well and they did not. An uglier place to hunt down a man in the darkness could scarcely have been found. Elsewhere the hill would have been called a mountain. It was about 800 feet high, steep and rocky, abounding in precipices and deep ravines on the other side. Bob would have liked no better fun than to have devoted himself to dodging the sheriff, but he had other work to do and he would have run right into Mr. Mason's arms if the cry of the madman, repeated at short intervals, had taken him that way. Bob followed the cry and at length had the satisfaction of feeling that he was gaining upon it.

"Shall I shoot him?" thought Bob. "No, I can't do that. I might hit Nellie, and, besides, to kill him would be terrible. What shall I do?"

Just then the cry came again, this time off on his left and sounding so close that it seemed not more than a dozen yards away. Bob's heart almost stood still.

"She's lost!" he gasped, for he knew that a ravine a hundred feet deep lay in that direction.

He turned his horse right into the bushes and dashed on a few yards, coming out upon the bare ledge which overhung the ravine. It was just as he expected. There stood the horse, riderless, and there at the edge of the precipice was the madman, with his sister flung over his shoulder like a sack of meal, her head hanging down behind.

"This ends it!" Bob heard him shout. "I'll have my revenge now. I'll take you back to Jupiter with me, Nell. See, I can fly! I'm going up now."

"Hold on!" shouted Bob, springing from the saddle. "Hold on, Mr. Wendell! I want to go, too."

It was a happy thought. Not a doubt but the madman would have leaped over the precipice if Bob had not interfered, but as it was he paused and looked back.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" he said. "I thought I killed you. Ha! ha! ha!"

"You can't kill me," said Bob, very quietly, all the while advancing. "Don't you know that the inhabitants of Jupiter never die?"

"That's so. Do you really come from that mighty planet?"

"Certainly I do. How else could I speak the language as I am doing now?"

"You are right, there. When did you come down?"

"Last week. I'll go back with you now, but say, you can't take that girl. She'll weigh you down so that we won't be able to fly."

"Do you think so?"

"I'm sure of it. I can take her, though."

"You? Why you more than me? She is my sister. I have a right to take her, you have none."

Bob was close up to him now and he saw that Nellie was entirely unconscious. The madman stood on the very edge of the precipice. Poor

Bob trembled so that he could hardly speak, but he pulled himself together and, holding out his arms, said, commandingly: "Give me the girl. I can take her. I possess a magic talisman which will make her weight just nothing at all."

"You do?" asked the madman. "You really do?"

"I do. Give me the girl, now!"

"Take her, then. Come on!" yelled Wendell, and, throwing Nellie into Bob's outstretched arms, he gave one spring over the edge of the precipice and was gone.

## CHAPTER XIX.—Dodging the Sheriff.

If our friend Hustling Bob had not been a boy who always had his wits about him, it might have gone hard with both Nellie Wendell and himself that night. Certain it was that Bob had saved Nellie's life again, but the question now was whether he could save himself from the sheriff, for at that most critical moment when he stood there at the edge of the precipice supporting the fainting girl in his arms, he heard the horses of the pursuing party coming up behind him. The sheriff was on his trail. A moment more might seal his fate and send him to State's prison for a long term of years. Surely now was the time to hustle if Bob ever meant to hustle again. He gave one worried look over the precipice and then taking up the unconscious girl, hurried along the edge, making as little noise as possible. It was hard work—all that Bob's strength was equal to—and in a very few moments he realized that he could go no farther.

"Hey, fellers! Here are the horses!" some one shouted behind him. "This is all right. They can't be far away from here."

"Which way did they go—right or left?" called another voice in answer, which Bob recognized as belonging to Sheriff Mason. It was a voice which he had only too good reason to know.

"Most likely to the right," was the answer. "They found themselves cut off and had to abandon the horses. We've got to leave ours here, too. We'll break our necks if we don't."

There was considerable noise then. Bob made up his mind that the sheriff's posse were dismounting. Then there was a crashing among the bushes. It was a moment of intense anxiety. Bob could not tell whether they were coming to the left where he was or going in the opposite direction, but as the sounds soon died away he knew that he was safe for the moment in the hiding-place which he had hastily chosen between two big boulders, where he had laid Nellie Wendell down.

"Bob! Is it you, Bob?" asked Nellie, in a faint voice, as Bob bent over her in the darkness, wondering if she would ever speak again.

"It is I, Nellie! I'm right here."

"Oh, Bob, where is he? What has happened? Don't let him get me! It is terrible! Why does he hate me when he used to love me so?"

"Hush!" said Bob. "Try and be quiet. He is gone, I don't know where. He won't come back again."

"Bob, you haven't killed him?" cried Nellie, suddenly sitting bolt upright.

"No, no! I haven't laid a finger on him."



"Oh, I could never endure it if you had harmed him," moaned Nellie, covering her face with her hands and weeping bitterly.

It was a trying moment, but Bob felt he had no time to waste. At any time the sheriff might return. That he would find out his mistake sooner or later and come back again, Bob felt perfectly sure.

"Nellie!" he whispered. "Listen to me. I am here to help you tonight. Try to help me by being as quiet as you can."

"I'm going to, Bob! I'm calm now. There, see, I've stopped. I'll not give way again."

"Thank you," said Bob. "Now listen. The sheriff is close to us. If I'm taken there is no telling what may happen to you. I must not be taken, and yet I cannot and will not desert you. That's the situation, Nellie. You see the fix I am in."

"I understand," said Nellie. "I'll be quiet."

"If they find us I'm lost," breathed Bob; "but I'll fight to the last. They've got to catch me before they can take me back to Janesburg, that's one thing sure."

## CHAPTER XX.—Bob Tells His Story.

"They are not anywhere around here. We've made a mistake. We'd better go back."

After listening to all sorts of talk, and some of it not very complimentary to himself, Bob heard this remark which gave him new life. The sheriff and his posse had made a pretty thorough search along the top of the bluff, too, but after all they missed their game, and this in spite of the fact that one of the men actually flashed a lantern in between the boulders. Why they were not discovered then Bob could not understand, but they were not, and after a little the men passed them by a second time on their return, and something was said about giving it up and going down the mountain after their horses. Bob waited until their footsteps died away in the distance before he dared to make a move.

"They seem to be gone now," breathed Nellie, "and, oh, I am so glad!"

"Don't say a word," answered Bob. "If it hadn't been for you I never could have stood it. I am innocent of any crime, and yet here I am hunted like a rat; it's terrible. I s'pose I've got to stand it, though."

"What is it, Bob? What does it all mean?" asked Nellie. "Tell me. I don't know that I can help you, but perhaps father can. It's just dreadful to have a thing like this hanging over your head."

"It's worse than you know, Nellie; but I can't talk about it now. I've got something else to tell you that you ought to know. Don't give way; I—I—oh, I don't know how to say it!"

"Speak out, Bob! Don't be afraid. I am going to be calm now. Poor Ed is dead!"

"You have guessed it, Nellie. I'm afraid it is true."

There was a long silence, and then Nellie said, in a low voice: "How did it happen, Bob?"

She had taken it far more quietly than Bob anticipated, and this was a great relief. He began and told the story in as few words as possible.

"And this is the end," breathed Nellie. "Well,

well! All this happened and I knew nothing about it. I was terribly frightened, Bob, and I suppose I must have fainted. Poor Ed! His troubles are over, and for his sake I am glad."

"We can't be sure," said Bob; "don't you think we ought to get down under the bluff and see what has become of him?"

"We certainly ought. We'll go now. I only hope he was killed outright. If he is there with his legs or arms broken, I——"

Nellie's voice choked. The thought was too much for her. Bob said a few encouraging words as he lighted the lantern.

"Will you lead the way?" he asked. "I haven't the least idea where to go."

Nellie took the lantern and started along the edge of the bluff. Soon they reached a point where the rocks began to descend and a little farther on they came to the base of the precipice and turned. A solid wall of rock towered above them now. They were upon a broad shelf bare of trees, the wind sweeping about them fiercely. If it had been daylight they could have seen the town of Brookville lying at their feet, and even dark as it was Bob recognized the spot.

"Oh, this is what we see as we ride out of the quarry!" he exclaimed. "This is where the old house is, 'Robinson's Roost,' I believe they call it, isn't it so?"

"Yes," replied Nellie. "The house is off there. You could see it plain enough if it was daylight. Hurry, Bob! We want to get under the place where my poor brother jumped."

A streak of rain struck their faces then. The storm was coming at last. In a moment it was coming down good and hard and they hurried on until Bob was sure they had passed the place, but no trace of the lunatic was found.

"Can it be possible that he escaped?" said Nellie. "He has done such desperate things! We must have gone away past the place."

"We have," said Bob. "Nellie, this would not do. You are getting all wet. Where is the cave you spoke of? The best thing we can do is to get into it and wait till it lets up a bit. I don't like to have you exposed to the storm."

"It's right here somewhere," replied Nellie, flashing her lantern about. Yes, here it is; well, we will stop for a little while anyhow. The sheriff may come back again and if he does it will be a good place to hide."

This was Nellie's idea, but Bob thought differently, as they turned in under the rocks, for the cave was nothing but a shallow opening in the towering wall, running in under the bluff, not over six feet.

"There's more of it," explained Nellie. "You can crawl through a hole at the end and come into a larger cave. We may as well sit down here on these stones. Perhaps we shall hear Ed call."

But they heard nothing but the patter of the rain as they waited. It was a poor time for talk, and for a long while Nellie sat in silence.

"Now, Bob," she said at last, "I've got something to say to you. I don't want to force you to speak, but I think you ought to. I have risked my life trying to help you tonight, and I think I have a right to know what all this means."

Bob caught his breath, but for a moment did not speak.



"Well, never mind, if you don't wish to," said Nellie. "I won't insist, but—"

"Stop! I'll tell," said Bob. "What's troubling me, Nellie, is that you may think the less of me. You say your folks used to live in Janesburg, Pennsylvania. Probably you have heard a good deal about the place, even if you don't remember living there. Did you ever happen to hear of the robbery at the bank three years ago, when a hundred thousand dollars in bills were taken in broad daylight, and the cashier, Mr. Brown, found unconscious on the floor behind his desk, shot through the back?"

"Yes, I've heard of it," said Nellie, in a low voice. "I remember father coming home and telling us all about it. A boy named Richards was arrested. He was the messenger in the bank. The robbery took place at noon, when the book-keeper had gone to dinner, and there was no one but Richards and Mr. Brown, the cashier, in the bank at the time."

"That was it."

"Surely, Bob, that terrible crime can have nothing to do with you?"

"It has all to do with me," replied the boy, sadly. "I am Bob Richards. I was arrested and charged with the robbery, and the assault. I was put in jail, and lay there waiting trial for months. Mr. Brown recovered, but his mind never could have been quite right, for he declared that I was in the bank and must have come up behind and shot him, while the truth is, he himself sent me into the yard behind the building to feed his horse, which he kept under a little shed there. You see, he lived out of town, and always rode in and out to business on a saddle horse. The first I knew I heard the shot, and when I ran in there he was on the floor alone with the revolver lying beside him. Like a fool I took up the revolver and there they caught me with it in my hand. Oh, it was a terrible thing, Nellie! You have no idea what I suffered! But I am innocent. I have no more idea who shot him or who took the money than you have. And that's the truth."

"I believe it. I know it," said a voice behind the boy, and it was not Nellie Wendell's voice, but a man's!

"Who spoke?" cried Bob, springing up. "There's someone in the cave!"

#### CHAPTER XXI.—The Lunatic's Confession.

"Oh, Bob, what can it mean?" gasped Nellie. "Who said that?"

"Just what I propose to find out," replied Bob, seizing the lantern and hurrying back into the cave.

He could see no one, however. To all appearance he and Nellie were alone.

"Hello!" cried Bob. "Who are you? Where are you? Speak?"

Not a word—not a sound came in answer to this appeal. There was a low opening at the end of the cave leading in under the rocks, and Bob stooped down and tried to see beyond it by flashing the lantern in.

"That's the way to the other cave," whispered Nellie, coming up behind him. "Bob, there must be somebody there."

"There must! You heard the voice, Nellie?"

"As plan as I hear you speak now."

"Then this mystery must be solved. 'Do you mind staying alone here in the dark?'"

"Go, Bob! If it will help you, go; but, oh, do be careful!"

"Hello, inside there! Hello!" cried Bob, thrusting his head into the hole.

He distinctly heard a deep groan then, and that was enough to send him forward. He had to crawl on his hands and knees, but the distance was not great into the other cave.

"Well!" Nellie heard him exclaim.

"Oh, Nellie! Come in here! It's your brother!" he immediately called out. "Come right along! He cannot harm you now!"

It was a terrible shock for the poor girl, but she bore it nobly. When she came into the inner cave Bob was bending over Edward Wendell, who lay unconscious and breathing heavily.

"Oh, Bob! What shall we do?" gasped Nellie. "Is he dead? Is he dying? Why don't he speak?"

"Hush! hush!" whispered Bob. "He is coming to himself. For my sake, as well as his, be calm." The lunatic opened his eyes and stared at them both.

"Nell!" he exclaimed. "You here? And this boy? Oh, where am I? What has happened? Ah, I remember! I heard you talking of the robbery. It has come home to me at last. I knew it would."

"He is sane!" whispered Bob. "The fall has restored his reason, but his leg is broken and so is his arm, and I'm afraid he is injured internally. Speak to him, Nellie. I'll stand back. Speak to him now."

Nellie knelt at the side of the sufferer.

"Ed, do you know me?" she asked.

"My sister! Yes, Nell. Where have I been? What does it all mean? Oh, I'm dying! That boy—where is he? There's something I must say before I go."

"Bob, come here!" said Nellie firmly. "Ed, look at him! Do you know who he is?"

"Yes," was the faint reply. "I know you are Bob Richards, of Janesburg. Young man, I am the cause of all your trouble. It was I who sneaked into the bank, shot Mr. Brown and stole the money. I've been a bad one, but there is some excuse for me. I think I must have been crazy when I did that. Have I been crazy? They told me I was. Is it true?"

"Yes, Ed," replied Nellie. "Keep quiet; try and think. What did you do with the money? Did you spend it? Tell me, and we will help you if we can."

"No, no, I didn't send it," replied the lunatic, in a confused way.

His reason seemed to be coming back to him, but his mind was anything but clear yet.

"I didn't spend it," he repeated. "I brought it up here and hid it. Let me see, where did I hide it? Why, it was up the big chimney in Robinson's Roost."

Bob gave a joyful cry.

"Then I'm saved!" he exclaimed. "Oh, if the sheriff was only here now!"

"The sheriff! Yes, he's after me! I must get out!" screamed the lunatic, and he made one desperate effort to rise, gave a cry of agony and fell back dead, to all appearances, at Bob's feet.

It was a terrible moment, and those which followed were hard ones for Bob. Poor Nellie was



terribly excited, and no wonder. It took time to bring her to the conclusion which Bob had already arrived at. At last she admitted that her brother must be dead.

"We mustn't stay here, Bob," she said then. "We must think of you now. If the money is really in Robinson's Roost, let us go there right away."

## CHAPTER XXII.—Robinson's Roost.

Robinson's Roost had an evil name, if ever a house had. It had been built many years before by a farmer who thought he could make money on the upland farm which lay behind it. Here he lived alone with a hired man for a long time, going to Brookville to buy supplies from time to time, until one day it was noticed that many weeks had elapsed since "old man Robinson" had been down the hill. This set people to talking, and at last they went up to the house to look for him, finding the body of the old man on the kitchen floor with a bullet in his back. Who killed him or how he met his death was never known, but it was certainly a case of murder. No money was found in the house, nor was the hired man ever seen again, and it was generally believed that he had shot the old farmer and stolen his cash. These were the facts, and since then rumor had it that Robinson's Roost was haunted, and that old Robinson's ghost walked about the deserted rooms at night. Bob had often heard strange tales of mysterious lights seen at the windows late at night, but he never was able to find a man who had actually seen old Robinson's ghost.

"Were you ever inside the old ranch?" he asked Nellie, as they walked along.

"Oh, yes, several times," was the reply. "We used to have picnics up here some years ago."

"Certainly. If we keep on as we are going we shall come to it in a moment. It stands right at the edge of another precipice, and there is a road leading down off the hill just beyond it. Were you never there?"

"Never," replied Bob. "I've had all I could do without going pleasuring. The sheriff don't seem to have come this way, Nellie. I guess we are safe on that score."

"Yes, and there's the Roost. A dismal-looking old place, is it not?"

"It is. Hark! Didn't you hear voices?"

"No, it is only the wind."

"It seemed to me that I heard someone calling, but probably I was mistaken. Well, here we are, sure enough. Oh, Nellie, it seems too good to be true! If we can only find that money and restore it to the bank I shall be the happiest fellow on earth. I tell you, it is an awful thing to be constantly hunted as I have been these last few years."

"I can imagine it, Bob. I have felt much the same way. We never knew when my brother was going to appear, and when I think of that dreadful night when he dragged me out of my room and tied me to the railroad track—oh, Bob, if it hadn't been for you that night, just think what my fate would have been!"

"We won't think of it, Nellie. We will look forward, not back. Here we are. Upon my word, I don't wonder people feel afraid of this house. I never saw such a dismal place before."

It was dismal-looking and no mistake. Planted up there in the hillside, almost at the edge of the precipice, the very situation of the old farmhouse made it lonely beyond all description. What it might have been in the days of old Robinson, seen in the bright sunlight, was one thing; what it was now on that dark, stormy night, quite another. The windows were all broken, the roof had partly tumbled in, rank weed grew thick in the little garden, and the whole place bore an air of ruin and desolation. It was no wonder that simple-minded people were afraid of Robinson's Roost and talked of ghosts.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Nellie, drawing back. "I don't like the idea of going in there, Bob."

"Don't go, then," said Bob. "I'll go it alone."

"But I don't want you to go—I—oh, Bob! Bob! Look up there!"

She seized Bob's arm and pointed up to the windows in the second story. A light flashed behind them, passing from window to window. Bob thought he could see the figure of a tall man behind it. Suddenly there was a resounding crash inside the house, as though the whole crazy structure was falling, and a wild cry rang out upon the night. Instantly the light vanished and all was still.

## CHAPTER XXIII.—Bob Faces the Sheriff at Last.

"Oh, Bob! Come away! Come away quick!" cried Nellie, clutching our hero's arm.

A fierce gust of wind swept over the old house. It rocked and trembled. Bricks and beams were heard falling above, but Bob could not move the obstruction, and in a moment he appeared in the open again.

"I can't do it, Nellie!" he exclaimed; "but I heard someone calling up there; we must go for help."

"Help! Help!"

It seemed to be the echo of the brave boy's words borne upon the wind. The cry came from the upper story of the Roost, and Bob could no longer doubt that a human being was imprisoned there.

"I'll get to him!" he cried. "Wait here, Nellie, and don't you be afraid."

He flung aside his coat and hat and ran to the big oak tree, "shinnin'" up the trunk until he reached the crotch, and then on to a long limb which extended out over the ruined roof of the Roost. Nellie watched him breathlessly as he seized the limb with both hands and letting himself drop, began slowly working his way out to the roof.

"Oh, Bob! Do be careful!" cried Nellie, when all at once she was startled by hearing a rush of feet behind her and several men came dashing into the yard.

"Why, there's the boy now!" shouted one. "See him there on that limb! And, by Jove, here's Wendell's daughter! I knew it was she who gave us away. Where's the sheriff? Can he be inside the house?"

Someone seized Nellie, but the man who had spoken ran forward and throwing up his rifle took aim at Bob.

"Drop!" he shouted. "Drop, or I'll fire! It don't make no difference to me, Bob Richards, whether I take you dead or alive!"



By this time Bob was hanging over the fallen roof. Alarmed by Nellie's scream, he looked back and saw what had happened.

"Come and take me, if you want me!" he shouted, "but don't you harm that lady. Your business is not with her!"

"Bang!" went the rifle.

The shot whizzed past Bob's head as he let go his hold and went flying down into the upper story of the Roost, through the fallen roof. He landed upon a mass of rubbish and sprang to his feet. The lantern which he had tied about his waist had been extinguished by the fall, but he hastened to strike a match and light it again, listening as he did so to the shouts outside.

"Upstairs there with you, boys! We must take him dead or alive!"

"No, no! The old shebang is doomed! See her rock! She's going to collapse altogether."

"No, she hain't! Get in there! Get in!"

"Get in yourself, and take the risk. I don't."

"You're cowards, every one of you! I'll go myself if no one else will go!"

Such were the cries which Bob was listening to now. Suddenly there came another right beside him.

"Help me! Help me! I'm being crushed to death!"

If this was a ghost he certainly had a good strong voice. Bob flashed the lantern about and saw that the big chimney had fallen down to the floor level, having lost the support of the roof. With it had come the partition which blocked the stairway, and under the mass of bricks Bob could see a man's head and shoulders projecting. It was Sheriff Mason, of Janesburg, and he recognized Bob, with a startled cry.

"Don't kill me! Don't kill me, Bob Richards!" he yelled, as the boy rushed forward. "I'll let up on you if you only set me free!"

#### CHAPTER XXIV.—Conclusion.

"Don't be a fool, Mr. Mason! Am I murderer? You know better. Stop that noise. I'll help you if I can."

This was Bob all over. He could not pass his worst enemy by in trouble. He set down the lantern and began hustling with the bricks, taking care to throw them on top of the fallen partition against which the sheriff's right-hand man, John Ashley, was pounding for all he was worth.

"Bob, I'm a goner," groaned the sheriff. "I came in here to look for you while the boys went on farther. Oh, I wish I hadn't now."

"Brace up till I get these bricks off of you," replied Bob. "I'll have you out of here all right. Good heavens! What's this?"

There among the bricks Bob had suddenly come upon an old leather grip, all crushed out of shape, which seemed to be well stuffed with something. It had evidently come down with the chimney, and underneath it, as Bob pulled it up, lay a new cash-box which was plainly marked with Mr. Wendell's name.

"It's the money! It's the money belonging to the Janesburg bank, and Mr. Wendell's money, too!" shouted Bob. "It's all true, just as he said it. I am saved!"

He had forced open the grip, and turned it toward the lantern now. It was stuffed full of

green packages of greenbacks. Just as the lunatic had taken them from the bank and hidden them in the fallen chimney there they were now.

"What is it?" cried the sheriff, forgetting his fear in his amazement. "Did you hide the bank money here, Bob?"

"I! Never! The thief hid it, and I can prove who he was. Sheriff, you have no use for me, now."

"Don't leave me! Don't leave me, Bob! This old Roost is going to fall!" yelled the sheriff, as Bob seized the cash-box and the bag and hurried to the hole in the roof.

He had no notion of doing so. Tossing the box and grip out through the hole, they fell at the feet of John Ashley, who had given it up and came outside again. Then Bob returned to his work and tossed the bricks aside with a will, explaining the situation to the astonished sheriff as he worked.

"Great heavens! Why, it's a bag full of greenbacks!" cried John Ashley, as the bundles of bills came tumbling about his head.

"Get a rope or something!" yelled Bob. "The sheriff is up here! Get a rope so that I may lower him down!"

He had Mr. Mason free now, but the man was so badly bruised that he could scarcely stand.

"Bob, I'm glad of it!" he said. "You're a good fellow—a noble fellow. I never could quite believe you guilty. I'm your friend from this night on."

"We want to get out of here quick!" cried Bob, as a gust of wind struck the old house, causing it to rock worse than ever. "We can't wait for help. The old thing is going to fall!"

He rushed to the window and kicked out the sash.

"Drop out of there!" he cried. "Do it now."

"I can't; it will kill me. My ankle is sprained," was the reply.

"Here, let yourself down and hold on to my hands! I can lower you so near the ground that you can't come to any harm," persisted Bob, and that was exactly what he did. Bracing his legs against the window he helped the sheriff out and lowered him as far as he could.

"There you go!" he shouted, and as the sheriff dropped a great cry went up from those outside, for at the same instant a loud noise was heard and without other warning the old house went down all in a heap, carrying the brave boy with it, while the men shouted and Nellie screamed and the wind howled over the hill louder than ever.

It looked to be the end of our hero then, but no one could say that Bob had not hustled to the last.

\* \* \* \* \*

"What's this I hear about Bob Somers, Wendell?" demanded Squire Evans, meeting the Congressman on the street next morning as the Hon. James S. sprang out of his carriage in front of the bank.

"I don't know what you have heard about him, Squire," was the reply.

"You don't?"

"No."

"Why, I heard he was killed last night up at Robinson's Roost by that Pennsylvania sheriff and——"

"And as the beginning of your news is a lie the



end is probably equally false," interrupted Mr. Wendell. "Bob is now in my house pretty badly bruised, but no more dead than I am. He's a noble fellow, and he has suffered a lot and I'm going to stand by him. Instead of the sheriff killing him, he saved the sheriff's life, and what's more, has made a friend of him. There's a whole lot more to it, Squire, but I can't tell it now. My son Edward is dead. You remember him? Yes? Well, I'll tell you the rest some other time."

Up at Mr. Wendell's house there was sadness and there was also rejoicing. Bob lay in one room and the corpse of Edward Wendell lay in another. It was the sheriff and his posse who took hold and rescued Bob from the ruins of Robinson's Roost, and when Mr. Wendell came with his carriage at daylight it was the sheriff and his men who helped him to carry the body of his wayward son from the cave. Two days later there was a funeral at the Wendell mansion, to which none but the family came. One year later there was a wedding, to which all Brookville was invited. Mr. Robert Richards was the groom, Miss Nellie Wendell the bride, and no such swell affair was ever seen in Brookville before.

And why not? Our Hustling Bob was now one of the most successful business men in town, and the Hon. James S., whose fortune was saved by the recovery of his cash-box, was soon able to make good his losses and was as well as ever at the end of those twelve months. Immediately after his recovery Bob went to Janesburg to face his accusers. Nellie and her father accompanied him, for it was thought necessary that the brave girl should appear as a witness to her brother's dying words. But this was unnecessary. Bob found no accusers in Janesburg. Sheriff Mason had settled all that, and the stolen cash was already secure in the vaults of the bank. Instead of finding trouble to face in his native town, Hustling Bob found himself the hero of the hour, and he deserved it all. Indeed, the townspeople would have given him a public reception, but Bob would not listen to this, and he hurried away on Nellie's account. The stone business boomed that year as it never had before, and with Mabie's earnest help Bob was able to pay all his debts and his wedding day found him owing no man anything but love.

Charley King stood up with him and he was happily married to the girl of his choice. Since then Bob has grown rich and is today one of the foremost men in town. Now, just suppose for argument's sake that Bob, when he broke jail and ran away in Janesburg, had given up in despair and laid down under his troubles as many another might have done, where would he have come out? No doubt he would have gone to the bad altogether, and—but what right have we to suppose anything of the sort? With our hero such a thing was impossible. He was Hustling Bob.

Next week's issue will contain "JACK JORDAN OF NEW YORK; OR, A NERVY YOUNG AMERICAN."

## JEALOUSY UNKNOWN WHERE THERE'S WORK

In the African jungle polygamy is favored by native women. Each new wife proportionately reduces the burden of the others.

Dr. Fowzer, American globe trotter, attended a palaver at which an only wife, through her brother, petitioned the chief of the tribe to compel her husband to take on more wives. Her jog was too much for one woman, she said. There the women do all the work.

## FULL N. Y. CAVALRY BRIGADE PROPOSED

Plans are being made to so increase the cavalry units of the New York National Guard that there will be a full cavalry brigade, and the One Hundred and Second Cavalry Regiment of New Jersey can be detached from the New York units. Major-General William N. Haskell now has sufficient men and funds to organize an additional full regiment of cavalry in this State and it will be done if the War Department approves. There is now one full regiment, the One Hundred and First Cavalry, commanded by Colonel James R. Howlett, of Brooklyn.

## LOS ANGELES WILL HAVE RADIO WEATHER MAP RECORDING SET

As a result of the successful transmission of weather maps to the U. S. S. Kittery, government officials state that receiving apparatus for recording weather maps will be installed at the various air ports under government supervision. It is said the United States Navy field at Lakehurst, N. J., will be the first so equipped. It is also believed map receiving sets will be installed in the giant dirigible Los Angeles.

Official opinion is that if the Shenandoah could have had the advantage of such equipment it might have received warning of the approaching storm and averted the disaster.

Thus far the transmission of weather maps has been declared highly successful. The maps are being transmitted regularly to the U. S. S. Kittery from NAA, the naval station at Arlington, Va., and on short waves from the laboratory of C. Francis Jenkins, the inventor of the system. The results from NAA, which transmits the weather reports on 8,300 meters, are not received as well as those from the short wave apparatus on 50 and 24 meters of Jenkins.

The experimenters announce that the entire map is not transmitted, but before the ship leaves port it is supplied with a map showing the coast line, the eastern part of the United States and the islands in the South Atlantic Ocean. It is said this makes necessary only the transmission of the barometric pressure and the wind velocity.

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# AL, THE ATHLETE, OR, THE CHAMPION OF THE CLUB

By R. T. BENNETT

(A Serial Story)

## CHAPTER XI—(Continued)

He bounded too high in the air and landed at twenty-two feet and six inches from the take-off.

That brought a hopeful look to Nick's face, and he exclaimed:

"I'll beat that or break a leg!"

He started, and swiftly increasing speed until he reached the mark, he sprang in the air, launching himself forward with the speed of a gun-shot. His body did not rise very high, but it made a curve in the air, and his heels shot forward to the full length of his legs.

Whump! he landed, and the tape was run out.

"Twenty-three feet, two inches!" shouted the announcer.

"Thunder!" ejaculated Al, in delight and amazement. "Nick, old fellow, you're a wonder!" and he fairly hugged his smiling chum, while the crowd cheered.

"There's going to be some records smashed before the day is over," predicted Marsh. "Our fellows are out for war, and no mistake."

Hope and Clark slunk away with expressions of rage and chagrin on their faces, for there were no second or third man prizes.

Drew met them, and they held a whispered conference.

"They are making us look like thirty cents!" Hope growled.

"Well, they won't keep it up long!" hissed Drew.

"How can we stop them?" asked Clark sulkily.

"I've already attended to that."

"How could you, Jim?"

"Filled the water-cooler in the locker room with a drug, and I've seen some of them drinking it already. It's a tasteless drug, and will get in its fine work after about fifteen minutes."

With grins of expectation on their faces, the three young rascals moved away, to watch and wait for their rivals to succumb to the drug.

"Adams and Drew ready for the pole vault!" warned the announcer.

Drew grinned and said to his friends.

"Now watch him break his neck, boys. I've cut his pole."

Ignorant of his danger, Al got ready for the pole vault.

## CHAPTER XII.

### In the Water.

A contest between the two captains of the clubs aroused the greatest interest among the spectators, more especially as everyone knew that there was a most bitter rivalry between them.

Al walked over to the hurdle, near which a small group of the athletes had gathered, and Barry said to him:

"There are to be two trials, Adams."

"What's the record vault?"

"Eleven feet, ten and a half inches."

"Going to toss for first man at the pole?" demanded Drew.

"It's customary for the visiting team to have first chance," said one of the judges. "I suppose that gives Adams the first vault."

"That's so," assented the mill-owner's son, with a wicked grin.

He expected to see Al fall and break his neck, and he then could make any kind of vault and win the contest.

The two poles were lying on the ground near the boys, Al's having a blue ribbon tied to the end, and Drew's having a red one. Drew had reversed the ribbons to deceive Al.

Nick picked up one of the poles and handed it to Al, saying:

"Here's your stick. Do your prettiest, now!"

"Can I set the cross-bar at any height I think I can clear?" asked Al, as he faced the judges.

"Certainly."

"Then put it at 11 feet 11 inches."

"Why," gasped Barry, "that's above the amateur record, Al!"

"I know it," was the calm reply.

"If you can go over it Drew will have to beat it, or be beaten."

"That's exactly what I am aiming at."

Drew said nothing, for he never expected to see Al make the vault.

The stick was set, and everyone got out of the way.

Adams drew back to a fair distance and dashed forward.

Thump! went the end of his pole into the ground close to the cross-bar, and up in the air rose the young athlete, soaring higher and higher every moment, until at length his body was almost up to the bar.

Then out shot his legs, and with a sudden downward pressure on the pole he bent his extremities at a sharp angle.

For an instant his feet hovered above the bar, and everyone in the audience glared at him with bated breath.

Drew was looking for the pole to snap under his weight, and expected to see Al fall.

But no!

His feet went over the bar cleanly.

He let go the pole, and it fell away in one direction, while Adams shot off in the other.

He went clear over the bar and began to fall on the other side.

In a moment more Al landed upon his feet, and a tremendous cheer burst from the audience, accompanied by a loud clapping of hands.

Drew was frantic over the failure of his plot. He was scowling when Clark handed him the other pole, and said:

"Your turn next."

"I thought you cut Adams' pole so it would break," whispered Hope.

"So I did; but I guess I didn't cut through it enough."

"Next man up!" exclaimed Barry, interrupting them just then.

"Can you get over the bar at 11 feet 11 inches?" asked Hope anxiously.

"If he did I can!" was the savage reply.

And Drew went to the mark, nerved himself for the ordeal and started.



Along he came with a rush, and planting the end of his pole on the ground, he rose in the air. But there sounded an ominous snap!

His pole broke in two, and he fell with a crash to the ground.

A shout went up from the audience, and they rose in their seats, while those near Drew ran to pick him up.

He was stunned, and they carried him to the dressing-room, where a physician attended him.

He soon recovered, badly bruised and considerably shaken up.

Hope and Clark were with him, and he groaned:

"I'm knocked out for the day."

"Can't you enter any more of the contests?" asked Clark in dismay.

"Not one. I ain't able. I'm sore all over."

"What caused your pole to break?"

"Did you examine it?"

"Yes. It looked as if it had been cut half in two, and——"

"And what?"

"It had a blue ribbon on it."

"Good heavens! I've fallen into my own trap. By mistake Marsh gave my pole to Adams, and I got hold of his without noticing it."

"Then we can't put up any kick, or we will be found out," said Hope.

The three conspirators soon left the room and went out in the leld, Drew limping between his two cronies to a seat near some of his friends.

The running hop-step-and-jump between Joe Winters, of the Juniors, and Bowers, of the Mercurys, had been won by the former, who scored 39 feet against Bowers' 38 feet 9 inches.

Al was delighted, for all his men thus far had been straining every effort to defeat their rivals, and were doing ever so much better than the most hopeful of them expected.

"The next event is a swimming contest between Adams, of the Midwoods, and Howard, of the Mercurys!" shouted the announcer. "The first event will be a 50-yard dash straight away, the next a swim on the baik against time, and the last will be swimming under water."

The Red River flowed through one end of the grounds, and the two boys were quickly clad in swimming trunks and at the float.

The audience could see them from the stand easily.

A number of them went down to the float, however, and watched the two well-built boys crouch, ready to dive the moment the starter's pistol rang out for the 50-yard dash to a pole with a flag at its top.

Al expected a hard tussle with Howard, for he was accounted a very fast swimmer. But he did not fear the Mercury boy.

There was a moment of suspense, then the pistol was discharged.

Bang!

Splash! Splash!

Both swimmers struck the water so close together that one could hardly tell which went in first.

Al was an expert, and the moment he came to the top he began using a strong stroke that carried him through the water swiftly.

His opponent used the trudgeon stroke and shot past him.

The water boiled and frothed around their

heads, and the friends of each swimmer began yelling encouragement to their favorites.

It was only a short dash, and Al made the error of not employing the exhausting, but powerful, stroke used by Howard.

The result was that the Mercury boy reached the stake two lengths ahead of Adams and won the contest in 30 seconds.

Defeat only aroused all the determination in Al to beat his opponent in the other two trials.

They swam back to the float, and the victor was cheered heartily.

"This won't do, Al," said Nick, as he rubbed his chum down.

"I did my level best, old fellow."

"I don't doubt it. But he beat you badly."

"Better luck next time."

The boys went into the water for the second event, but the judges called the result a tie, as they could not decide it.

Then they prepared for the last event.

"Three stakes to turn, gentlemen," announced Barry.

"It's a swim under water that Howard don't like," whispered Nick.

"If I don't win I won't come to the surface again!" laughed Adams.

"Ready!" shouted Barry just then.

Side by side the two boys poised themselves at the edge of the float, waiting for the signal.

The moment it came Al located the three stakes and plunged.

Just as he dove he drew in a long, deep breath and held it.

The next instant the swimmers' bodies disappeared beneath the surface. Not a ripple showed where they were swimming.

Al struck out as straight as he could for the first stake, which stood well out from the float, and opening his eyes, he saw the white body of Howard gliding along close beside him.

Adams increased his speed to pass him, when suddenly he felt the other treacherously seize him by the ankle.

"Villainy!" he thought indignantly.

He managed to tear himself free and surged ahead of Howard, went around the first turn, and saw the other deliberately avoid rounding the stake and make a short-cut for the second stake.

"By Jove, every one of those Mercury fellows are crooked!" was the thought that flashed through Al's mind when he saw the treachery of his opponent. "He failed to make the first turn, and now he is taking a short-cut to the second stake!"

He called all his strength to his aid, and headed for the second stake with a speed that carried him past Howard.

Seeing that he was going to lose despite his treachery, the Mercury boy seized Adams, and a struggle began between them.

Both became turned around in the brief time during which they fought there under water, and they lost their bearings.

But Adams managed to wiggle out of the grip of the desperate young rascal with whom he was competing, and swam away at random.

In a moment he was out of Howard's sight.

(To be continued.)



# PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, JUNE 8, 1927

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## INTERESTING ARTICLES

### KING DISLIKES ANY "BOB"

Shingled tails and shingled heads are in the same class with King George. He doesn't like horses with bobbed tails any better than he likes short-haired women, and he has been very frank in saying so at recent horse shows.

### SMILE OF U. S. ACTRESS INSURED FOR \$250,000

A \$250,000 smile adorns the face of Fay Marbe, an American actress now playing in London. In what is believed to be the first transaction of its kind, the actress has insured her smile for this amount with a British company.

The policy provides that the insurance shall be collectible if at any time within the next ten years her smile loses its charm because of accident or illness. The amount of the premium was not disclosed.

### DUCHESS VIEWS HABITS OF EAGLES FROM PLANE

"The way of an eagle" has recently been investigated first hand by the Duchess of Bedford who has been utilizing a light airplane to fly over the Spanish mountains studying birds and their habits.

Although cases are frequently recorded of eagles attacking planes the titled naturalist carried out her experiments without any alarming incidents.

### FREE SUN BATH ALLOWED BY PERMEABLE CLOTHING

Sunlight treatment will be presently available, not only artificially and inexpensively, but will be free for all if the claim put forth by Professor A. M. Low proves justified. This British scientist claims to have devised a method by which clothing without change of appearance or durability becomes permeable to ultra violet rays.

Clothes from the treated material would mean health for all men and women, the scientists declares. His claimed discovery of a free sun bath treatment while you walk was made by chance in the course of an X-ray experiment

## LONDON BANK TREASURES OLD TYPE POUND NOTES

Many London banks possess collections of old banknotes, practically valueless as exchange, but much sought after by collectors.

The finest examples of old English notes are to be seen at the Institute of Bankers, in Bishopsgate, London, which contains thousands of notes issued during the last two centuries.

In this collection are examples from the original Bank of England £1 and £5 issues, a Bank of Scotland note dated 1731 for £12 Scots (£2 sterling), a note for 13 pence Irish (1 shilling sterling), which was issued in 1804 by a Cork grocer, Dennis O'Flynn, and a £5 note issued by the Corporation of Liverpool in 1794.

Other curiosities are notes for 5 shillings and 2 shillings and 6 pence issued by the Birmingham poorhouse and others, issued by a Wednesbury manufacturer, redeemable in pounds of rod iron.

## LAUGHS

### TRY AND DO IT!

When in Rome, do as Mussolini does.—Lafayette Lyre.

### COULDN'T BE A CRAZE

Winks—"Your friend Jones is one of the finest pianists I ever heard. Why don't he go on the stage?"

Minks—"Wouldn't pay. His name is too easy to pronounce."

### A DELIGHTFUL EFFECT

Artist—"Those evergreen on the north side of your house have a delightful effect."

Farmer—"I should say they had. Them trees keep off the wind and save 'bout eight dollars' worth o' firewood every winter."

### BOUDOIR GENERALSHIP

Jane—"That Mr. Shallopate is at the door. Shall I tell him you are engaged?"

Miss Pinkle—"Show him into the parlor, Jane." "Yes'm."

"And, Jane, after he lays his box of candy on the mantel, tell him I am out."

### HE PASTED HER ONE

"My husband examined many diamonds before buying this one for me, and he says it's the flower of them all."

"You mean flour."

"It's paste."

—Cincinnati Cynic.

### SPLITTING UP THE FAMILY

"They say Professor Rhetoric's children speak perfect English."

"Absolutely. They're all chips off the old infinitive."

—Nebraska Awgwan.

### NOT SUFFICIENT FUND

Monty: Did you hear how a child of six broke the bank last night?

Carlo: No. How?

Monty: Pounded it with a hammer till all the pennies fell out.

—Vassar Vagabond.



## The Story of an Ambuscade

Were you ever in a fight with Apache Indians? I was in one, and do not in the slightest degree crave for a repetition of the experience.

It took place in August, 1881, when Nana with his band of Mescalero Apaches were raiding and desolating Grant, Dona and Socorro counties in New Mexico.

Before this event the people had enjoyed a few months respite from the ravages of the old chief Victorio, whom the alleged bad faith of the government had driven on the war-path.

For two years and a half Victorio had set Colonel Hatch and his colored Ninth cavalry at defiance, and civilization and progress were arrested by the scalping knife of the savage chief.

In that period four hundred men, women and children were tortured, outraged and murdered with that fiendish cruelty which stamps the Apache as the most ruthless and merciless of American Indians.

In an evil day for himself, but a happy one for New Mexico, Victorio ventured to cross the Mexican border into the State of Chihuahua.

This Mexican State had no maudlin sympathy for incarnate fiends such as the Apaches.

It puts a price upon an Indian's scalp the same as upon that of a wolf, and sufficiently large to urge its soldiers to the greatest activity.

It was to the Mexicans under General Luis Terrasas that the Territory of New Mexico owed its temporary relief from the raids of the Apaches.

He surprised Victorio and his band in the Costillos Mountains about eighty-five miles southwest of El Paso, killed most of the braves, including Victorio, and took forty-four squaws and children prisoners.

Unfortunately, Nana, Victorio's lieutenant, and about twenty braves made their escape.

They were joined by a number of renegades from the Mescalero Apache agency, and, with the advent of the rainy season, which begins in July and ends with September, another Indian war was inaugurated.

Nana was a younger and more active man than Victorio, and the rapidity of his movements paralyzed the troops.

A splendid Indian, he stood five feet and eight inches in height, well set, wiry, and noted in the tribe as a very fleet runner.

He could out-travel a horse, and keep it for days together.

His daring raids in two months established a reign of terror throughout New Mexico.

The trains on the Southern Pacific were guarded by troops, stages ceased to run, freighting was stopped, and towns were as thoroughly cut off from supplies as though they were undergoing a regular siege.

For weeks in Silver City, the seat of Grant County, the bakers baked bread but once a week, and the common necessities of life reached famine prices.

Such was the state of affairs when, on the evening of August 18, the little command of twenty men from the Ninth Cavalry, with which I had offered to serve as a volunteer, rode into the

mining camp of Lake Valley to rest for a few hours before taking up the trail of the wily Nana.

Lieutenant George W. Smith, a veteran of the civil war, and as gallant a soldier as ever drew saber, was in command.

There was a very bad feeling existing at the time between the citizens and the troops.

The latter were denounced as worse than useless, as not caring to fight the Indians, and as having well earned the sobriquet of "Buffalo" soldiers, which old Victorio had bestowed upon them in derision of their futile attempts to vanquish him.

Among the men around Lake Valley who shared this sentiment to an absurd degree was George Daly, superintendent of the Lake Valley mines, an old Californian and Colorado miner, and a man of the most desperate courage.

During the rest at Lake Valley Daly taunted Lieutenant Smith for not pressing the Apaches strongly.

Smith explained that he had but twenty men, while the Indians had fully three times that number, but he added that if Daly was so anxious to show what he was made of he could raise a party of citizens and come along himself.

Daly accepted the challenge, and in a few hours had collected together and armed some twenty citizens, mostly miners, to accompany Lieutenant Smith's command.

Daly's men were not very well mounted, and were mainly armed with the old Winchester rifle, which carries only about three hundred yards.

The soldiers were armed with the regulation Springfield carbine.

It was not until the morning of the 19th, at about one o'clock, that the command left Lake Valley, citizens and soldiery.

We had information that the Indians were camped at Borendo Springs, and we hoped to come up with them before daylight.

About nine miles south we came upon the place where the Indians had camped for the night, and the trail at once grew hot.

Everything showed that they had only just "struck" camp, and as the "sign" was plenty we had no trouble in "lighting it" almost at a gallop.

It led on to the mouth of the Gaballon Canyon, on the west slope of the Mimbres Mountains, and about eight miles southwest of the ranch of a stockman named Brockman.

Very soon after we entered the canyon the advance guard of five men fell back and reported Indians ahead about a half mile off.

Lieutenant Smith ordered the guard to move on a short distance in advance, but they were evidently getting demoralized in the face of the enemy, and we had gone but a little way when they again halted and waited for the main body to come up.

The sergeant in charge said that he wanted flankers to support him, and clearly did not regard with pleasure the post of honor he occupied.

The lieutenant ordered him to again advance about four hundred yards, but the guard had not gone ten yards when fire was opened on the party from both sides of the canyon.

The Indians were in ambush all around us. Not a single Apache could be seen, but every



cactus bush and every boulder seemed to vomit forth fire.

Men dropped on every side before the unseen enemy.

At the first volley poor Smith was shot through the lower part of the body and fell from his horse.

"Help me on my horse!" he cried to the first sergeant. The latter ran to his assistance and placed him in his saddle.

"Dismount, boys, and take to the rocks for your lives!" was his next command.

It was immediately obeyed.

Every rock that a man could get cover behind was occupied as fast as the men could hurl themselves from their saddles.

Horses and everything besides arms were abandoned.

A I clambered behind the shelter of a huge boulder on the south side of the canyon where the fire seemed weakest I glanced below and saw Lieutenant Smith and Daly, side by side, make a dash down the canyon, as though to fight their way through the howling Apaches, whose wild, triumphant cries of "Hi Ki! Yo!" now filled the air.

They had both stood by the challenge made at Lake Valley, and had died as only brave men can die.

Two soldiers and one citizen while making for cover were shot dead in their tracks.

Two citizens escaped on horseback and brought the news of the disaster to Lake Valley.

The Indians now had it all their own way.

Having secured the government horses and the ammunition and arms of those killed, they made lively efforts to dislodge those living from the cover of the rocks.

The slightest exposure brought a leaden messenger; yet we were compelled to expose ourselves in order to watch that the red devils did not steal upon us unawares.

I had lost my canteen, and from ten o'clock in the morning until four in the afternoon, had to endure the most agonizing thirst under a lurid and semi-tropical sky, a fate I shared in common with nearly all of my companions.

It was not until after four o'clock that the Indians left, just as reinforcements could be seen in the far distance.

The most horrible incident of the fight was to be compelled to witness the mutilation of our dead comrades.

### BANK NOTES

The Bank of England note is about five by eight inches in dimension, and is printed in black ink, on Irish linen, water-lined paper, plain white, and with ragged edges.

The notes of the Banque de France are made of white water-lined paper, printed in blue and black, with numerous mythological and allegorical pictures, and running in denomination from the twenty-franc note to the one-thousand franc.

South American currency, in most countries, is about the size and general appearance of United States bills, except that cinnamon, brown, and state blue are the prevailing colors, and the Spanish and Portuguese are the prevailing languages engraved on the face.

The German currency is rather artistic. The bills are printed in green and black, and run in

denominations from five to one thousand marks. The latter bills are printed on silk fibre paper.

The Chinese paper currency is in red, and yellow paper, with gilt lettering and gorgeous little handdrawn devices. The bills, to the ordinary financier, might pass for washing bills, but they are worth good money in the "Flowery Kingdom."

Italian notes are of all sizes, shapes and colors. The smaller bills—five and ten-lire notes—are printed on white paper in pink, blue and carmine inks, and ornamented with a finely engraved vignette of King Humbert.

The one-hundred-rouble note of Russia is barred from top to bottom with all the colors of the rainbow blended, as when shown through a prism. In the center, in bold relief, stands a large, finely executed vignette of the Empress Catherine I. This is in black. The other engraving is not at all intricate or elaborate, but it is well done in dark and light brown and black inks.

The Austrian note is printed on light-colored, thick paper, which shows none of the silk fibre marks or geometrical lines used in ordinary paper currency as a protection against counterfeiting. Each bears upon it a terrible warning to counterfeiters, threatening imprisonment "to any one who shall make, sell, or have in possession any counterfeit or facsimile of this bill."

### MORE AND PRETTIER BATHROOMS, SLOGAN OF THE HOME OWNER

Our grandmothers and great-grandmothers suffered terrible handicaps in matters of home sanitation and hygiene because there were so many subjects—and such vital ones—that "just weren't nice to talk about." Women of today are rapidly learning that no subject is too delicate or too intimate to discuss frankly, if it concerns the health of their families. One of those subjects is plumbing.

Two great improvements are being achieved in modern homes, more bathrooms and more beautiful bathrooms. A family bath, built for utility alone, was the old-fashioned idea, but nowadays even many of the small houses have more than one bath and it is not uncommon to find a bath adjoining each bedroom. And what attractive places they can be made, with their clean white tile and shining equipment, their spacious showers and built-in china accessories. Even the bathroom curtains are artistic in the modern home.

Families insist upon having bathroom facilities when they are needed, and in that way they practice regular health habits. In addition, no one need wait to use the bathroom and be late to school or work, in consequence. Small cubby-holes are being made into baths; it is false economy to do without the facilities which can be had so easily. But when a new bathroom is being built, the only sensible plan is to avoid future unnecessary repairs by making sure that the equipment is of the best.

The island of Jamaica is 144 miles in length and 49 miles in width, and contains an area of 4,193 square miles. Its population, according to the census of 1891, was 625,271, when the whites numbered 14,692; mulattoes, 121,956; negroes, 488,624. The colored outnumbered the whites 41 to 1.



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### WINDSHIELD WIPER CARE NECESSARY

One reason why a windshield wiper becomes defective is due to small particles of tar sticking on the windshield and unless they are removed before the wiper is set in motion they wear tiny holes in the edge of the wiper, allowing rivulets of rainwater to remain on the windshield with each stroke. Car owners are advised to exercise care in removing such particles before operating the wiper.

### PARIS DOG DOCTOR USES VIOLET RAYS

Violet rays and electric dryers are installed in a luxurious dog and cat hospital opened for the pets of the rich in Paris, France.

The hospital has an operating room, bathroom, consulting room, private quarters for the animals whose owners can afford them and a "charity ward" for the less aristocratic pets of the poor.

"Autographed" photographs of expensive patients hang on the office wall.

### HAMMOCKS USED TO SAVE ROOM

The hammock is being discovered in France. Relief for crowded city apartments is seen in the hammock as a bed. City authorities are considering their use in public institutions. Serious periodicals propose the general use of the hammock in modest homes and apartments, where each new baby means, eventually, another bed, less room to move about and heavy expense.

### SING SING PRISONERS SLEEP ON FLOOR NOW

Some Sing Sing guests had to sleep on the floor, according to prison attaches yesterday, because the count of prisoners reached 1,638, which breaks all previous records for fifteen years. Those put upon the floor were, however, supplied with mattresses and bedding. The crowded conditions are due largely to the "tightening up" in the matter of allowing prisoners paroles. The prison population at Sing Sing is about two hundred more than in any of the other three prisons of the State.

### "JIXIES," TWO-SEATER TAXICABS, TO CAUSE FARE CUT IN LONDON

The long-promised two-seater taxicabs which, for an initial fare of 18 cents instead of the 25 cents which is now the standard, at last has reached the stage of final tests and will soon appear in the streets of London. These vehicles will be termed "Jixies" as "Jix" is the nickname given to Sir William Joynson-Hicks, the Home Secretary, under whose plan these cabs were introduced.

An interesting point in this connection is that London is the only European city where taxicabs are not permitted by law to have electric starters, as Scotland Yard considers the danger of mischievous boys accidentally starting the motors is too great.

### PAYING \$277,000,000 LOANS ON 102,709 HOMES

"Those comfortable, well-meaning individuals and their socialistic imitators who seek to solve

housing by doing things for the people directly or indirectly out of the public treasury might find something worth thinking about in the annual report of the Superintendent of Banks relating to savings and loan associations under the State Banking Department," said Charles O'Connor Hennessy, President of Franklin Society for Home-Building and Savings, the other day. "These associations with over 504,000 members by mutual co-operation in prudent accumulation and investment of savings are very effectively solving the problem for a vast number of families without making any fuss about it.

"This report shows that in January 102,709 families were paying off home mortgage debts to these associations, aggregating \$277,000,000. These funds came from systematic savings of 401,299 non-borrowing members."

### GOOD APPEARANCE SELLS AMERICAN CARS ABROAD

American cars are being sold in Germany through the appeal of their attractive appearance. This is sufficiently strong to overcome the 60 to 80 per cent. import duty, says A. C. Tessen, who has been placed in charge of Berlin sales for the General Motors Export Co.

Real leather upholstery, nickel trim, quality fabrics in closed cars, the attention to finish and appointments and four-wheel brakes are called the selling points of American cars.

"In 1924," says Tessen, "the American automobile imports into Germany constituted 18.8 per cent. of the total German auto registration. The first months of this year showed American imports had increased to 70 per cent. of the total registration." Tessen, who assumes his General Motors duties on July 1, has been representative of the Ford Motor Co. in Copenhagen for some time. Before entering the automobile field he was general sales representative for the Sheffield (England) industries and represented German shipbuilding firms.

### DECORATION OF HOME NEEDS CORRECT LIGHTING FIXTURES

Proper and sufficient illumination is necessary in the home, and it is dependent upon three factors, the number and location of the outlets, the number of lights in each fixture, and the size and power of the lamps. With the moderate cost of electricity, few homes are ill lighted in these days. But there is another phase which has not received sufficient attention.

That is the importance of suitable lighting fixtures in the decorative scheme of the home. A very beautiful fixture may be unattractive, if placed in an atmosphere to which it is unsuited. Fixtures run in types as much as furniture. For instance, fixtures for the Colonial home should be finished in antique silver, dull gold, pewter or brass. Early English houses need antique silver, English brass or bronze. The most appropriate finish for the Italian or Spanish home is gold, touched with colors and softened with antique.

Another point to be remembered is that the fixtures must be effective in daylight, and not merely when they are illuminated.



## TIMELY TOPICS

### BRICK CONSTRUCTION DURABLE

The man who builds a common brick house pays in advance just a little more for a home that lasts longer and is by the very nature of its construction immuned from fire danger.

### NIAM-NIAM ENTERS DOG SHOWS

Niam-niam dogs, the latest thing in society pets, come from the Sudan. The London Kennel Club has given the Niam-niam unusual recognition by declaring it a pure breed. The newcomer to British dog shows has a short coat of yellow hair, pointed ears, a curly tail and stands about fifteen inches high.

### HEART OF LATE EMPEROR KARL MAY BECOME ROYALIST SHRINE

Ex-Empress Zita of Hungary is considering a plan to send the heart of the late Emperor Karl to Stuplweisenburg for burial near the graves of Hungary's first kings.

It is intended to make the tomb containing Karl's heart a legitimist Mecca where those who still hail the boy Archduke Otto as king may offer prayers for his early return to the throne.

### CAMELS, REINDEER, BOTH BRING FURS

Camels, reindeer teams and airplanes are busy collecting furs from the far reaches of Russia to deck American dowagers and flappers.

Away down south in Russian Turkmeistan, where the sands are hot and the railways few and far between, camels—the ships of the desert—bring their cargoes of silvery “baby lamb” furs to the market. Persian lamb skins—the crinkly black Astrakhan—also start on the journey to America on the swaying camels.

### AGED DANCERS SHORTEN LIFE, IS DOCTOR'S VIEW

The views of English doctor at Monte Carlo are causing many elderly dance lovers on the Riviera to stop or pause in their revelry.

This doctor says that the present craze for dancing is taking five years from the lives of persons over sixty who indulge, and that scores of deaths in the British and American colonies in France are traceable to the fad.

“Dancing harms no one,” he says, “but the harmful part is that the man or woman over sixty usually insists on a youthful dancing partner.”

### BIRDS ATTACK LIGHTHOUSE CREW, EXTINGUISH BEACON

Keepers at Saddleback Light, on a pile of rocks out in the Atlantic six miles from Vinalhaven, Me., are unable to account for two recent attacks by seabirds during storms. Hundreds of birds took part in the attacks, and dozens of elder ducks, commonly called sea ducks, dashed themselves against the friendly beacon and were killed.

In the first attack a drake weighing ten pounds broke one of the lenses and put out the light. Disregarding their own safety, the keepers worked furiously through the storm to repair the dam-

age. Birds struck all around them. An assistant was knocked down by a big drake as he stepped into the gallery with a flashlight. Another bird broke a plate-glass window and fluttered to the floor and died of its wounds.

### NO MORE WILL IRISH BACHELORS GAZE ON LINGERIE MANNEQUINS

Bachelors in Enniskillen, Ireland, have been robbed of one of their favorite pastimes—that of attending mannequin parades.

There has been no explanation of the ruling. The news has been whispered about, however, that in view of the fact that married men are permitted to attend the latest fashions in chic lingerie are to be displayed, as well as the newest street creations. Lingerie should not interest bachelors, aver the shopkeepers.

The mannequins, most of whom are from Dublin and London, are peeved at the decree of the store managers. If married men are allowed to see the parades, declare the mannequins, single men should be equally honored.

“All men look alike to us,” ventured Mrs. Vera Hutchins, in charge of the mannequin employment agency of County Fermanagh, “and we contend that it is really taking a shingle off the roof of our livelihood, as bachelors as well as men with life mates are interested in smart dress—and undress—as a great many of them have no intentions of remaining bachelors always.”

The married men are allowed to attend the shows—only on condition that their wives bring them.

### STRIPES ADD DISTINCTION AND BEAUTY TO PLAIN WALL INTERIORS

In many a modern home the one-tone finish gives a background of simplicity and beauty. But to that finish is often added one touch—striping. And that one touch supplies a decorative note which makes the room distinctly different from the usual one-tone finish without the striping lines.

Obtaining the most effective results with stripes depends upon the choice of color for them and the entire wall. If you use paint made of white-lead and flattening oil, your color selection need be limited only by your desires.

Striping consists of a narrow banding line or lines applied directly to the side wall. It outlines all window frames, door frames and other interior trim and parallels the wood trim and the ceiling line, the distance away depending on the width of the stripe.

Choice of color for the striping is important. A color very close to that of the wall color will result in a subduing effect. On the other hand, an intensely contrasting color will add snap and brilliance.

There is practically no end to the number of shades and tints you can obtain with this all-lead, all-color paint mixed and tinted for the job. That is why this combination of white lead and flattening oil is used so frequently in producing striping and many other beautiful and distinctive wall finishes.



# PLUCK AND LUCK

## — Latest Issues —

- |                                                                         |                                                                                 |
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